

# VIJAYANAGAR & ITS LESSONS FOR MODERN INDIA

(Sir William Meyer Endowment Lecture)

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By  
D. RAMALINGA REDDY, M.A. B.L.



UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS  
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Respected Mr. Vice-Chancellor, friends:

I deem it a great privilege to have been called upon by the authorities of the Madras University to deliver the Sir William Meyer Endowment Lectures in History. It is one of the richest and most coveted endowments of the University and it has attracted some of the greatest scholars who have contributed to Indian historical writing; and it is no mean honour to follow the footsteps of eminent historians and it is my primary duty and pleasure to thank the Vice-Chancellor and the Syndicate of the University for this signal honour done to me.

I propose to deliver three lectures under this endowment now on the subject: "The Origin and Achievements of Vijayanagar and their lessons for Modern India". The first lecture to-day deals with the origin of the city and empire of Vijayanagar and the circumstances which brought about the establishment of that Hindu Empire. The second lecture will deal with the achievements of the Rajas of Vijayanagar as patrons of art and builders of Empire; the third lecture will describe the decline and fall of the Empire and the lessons that modern India can usefully draw from the circumstances of the origin, growth and decline of Vijayanagar.

**D. Ramalinga Reddy**

## HISTORY YET TO BE WRITTEN

"It is matter for regret that no history of the Vijayanagar empire in the form of a readable continuous narrative, embodying the results of specialist studies after critical sifting, has yet been written. Mr. Robert Sewell's excellent book entitled 'A Forgotten Empire, Vijayanagar' published in 1900, which recalled attention to the long-neglected subject and largely increased the store of historical material by making the Portuguese accounts accessible is avowedly a pioneer work designed as a foundation upon which may hereafter be constructed a regular history of the Vijayanagar Empire" so says V. A. Smith.

Sewell himself says in his Introduction (page 3) "I have little doubt that before very long the whole history of southern India will be compiled by some writer, gifted with the power of "making the dry bones live", but meanwhile the bones themselves must be collected and pieced together, and my duty has been to try and construct at least the main portions of the skeleton".

## LECTURE I

### **VIJAYANAGAR & ITS LESSONS FOR MODERN INDIA**

Sir William Meyer Endowment Lectures 1966-'67

*by*

SRI D. RAMALINGA REDDY

“ In the year 1336 A.D., during the reign of Edward III of England, there occurred in India an event which almost instantaneously changed the political condition of the entire South. With that date the volume of ancient history in the tract closes and the modern begins. It is the epoch of transition from the old to the new. This event was the foundation of the city and kingdom of Vijayanagar.” With these remarks, Robert Sewell of the Madras Civil Service, begins his narrative of ‘ A Forgotten Empire ’ (Vijayanagar). While all other scholars are agreed on the point that the empire was founded about the year 1336, Dr. Saletore argues that it was founded ten years later, in 1346. When Vijayanagar sprang into existence, the past was done with for ever and the monarchs of the new State became lord or overlord of the territories lying between the Tungabhadra and Cape Comorin.

There was no wonder in this. The Muslims persisted in their efforts to conquer all India. “ When these dreaded invaders reached the Krishna River, the Hindus of the south, stricken with terror, combined and gathered in haste to the new standard which alone seemed to offer some hope of protection. The decayed old states crumbled away into nothingness and the fighting kings of Vijayanagar became the saviours of the south for two and half centuries.”

The empire itself was founded by a band of five brothers, known as the Sangama brothers in the second quarter of the 14th century to check the onrush of Islam into South India. The invasions of Muhammad bin Tuglak and the subsequent troubles given by the Muhammadans to the Hindus of South India led to the rise of a feeling of political unity among them which ultimately resulted in the foundation of the Vijayanagara Empire.

Harihara, Kampa, Bukka, Marappa and Muddappa, the founders of the Empire, expanded it on all sides and ruled each over a portion of it. Kumara Kampana, the son of Bukka, extended the empire in the south as far as Madura. This put an end to the Sultanate at Madurai.

Taking into consideration the evidence of tradition, the Muslim historians and the inscriptions, it may be stated that the founders of Vijayanagara were at first in the service of Prataparudra of Warangal and that when that monarch was defeated by Muhammad bin Tuglak and taken prisoner, they fled to Kampili and took refuge in the court

of Kampilideva. They were, however, captured by the Sultan after the sack of Kampili in A.D. 1326 and were carried away to Delhi where they were forcibly converted to Islam. On the outbreak of a rebellion in Kampili and the collapse of the provincial government they were released by the Sultan from prison and sent with an army to Kampili to reconquer it from the rebels and rule the province as his deputies. This they successfully accomplished, but they did not long remain loyal to the Sultan. They came under the influence of Vidyaranya, who persuaded them to renounce Islam and throw in their lot with the Andhras who had just then succeeded, under the leadership of Kapaya, in expelling the Muslims and reestablishing their independence. Harihara and Bukka then reverted to their ancient faith and having declared their independence assumed the leadership of the Hindus of Kampili in their fight against the Muslims. During the reign of Bukka I, the Bhamani kingdom was founded in A.D. 1347 by Hasan Gangu, just north of the river Krishna. Since then both the Muhammadan Sultans of the North and Hindu Rajas of the South waged many wars.

The foundation of Vijayanagar Empire was an epoch-making event as it was the foundation of the "last great empire of the Hindus of the south. The foundation was timely. For, "everything that a Hindu loved and venerated was on the verge of total annihilation, the empire came into existence over the ashes of the Southern Kingdoms and represented the Hindu cause, fought for it and for over three centuries held sway in the South." (Rev. H. Heras, S.J.)

Every Hindu State, from the Yadavas in the Northwest to the Pandyas in the extreme South had fallen a prey to the invader's greed. First came the turn of the Yadavas of Devagiri. It was a mere accident that opened the floodgates of invasion. Ala-ud-din, Khilji, to avoid the intrigues at Delhi, came to the south and was informed of the fabulous wealth of the Devagiri ruler. Having a spirit of adventure and forced by necessity to amass wealth to put his secret plan into action, Ala-ud-din captured Elichpur and later on, Devagiri whose Raja, Ramachandra, was forced to give an enormous sum of money and jewels as tribute. The first blow was thus administered to the Hindu isolation of the south. Ala-ud-din and his successors, who followed his footsteps, taking advantage of the inherent weakness of the Hindu armies, the unimaginable wealth of the State and the utter want of unity among the Hindu rulers were tempted to invade the south. These events happened in A.D. 1294. After a decade and half later Ala-ud-din sent his General Malik Kafur to tap once again the riches of the Hindu Kingdom. Ramachandra was taken prisoner and sent away to Delhi, but later on was released. "His kingdom was laid waste; his capital was

captured; his treasury was emptied and was forced to pay an annual tribute." In 1309 A.D. Malik Kafur again invaded the south. The Kakatiyas of Warangal were as rich as the Yadavas and the fact that these Hindu States were rich was enough to induce the armies of Islam to move. Prataparudra, the Kakatiya prince, after a heroic resistance submitted and paid his tribute to prevent his kingdom from being annexed and to retain his religion from molestation.

In 1311 A.D. once again Malik Kafur marched to the south. This time it was the third powerful kingdom of the south, the Hoysala Empire of Vira Ballala III. The armies of the invader were much superior to the Hindu ruler's disjointed hoards. Ballala surrendered prudently, gave away a portion of his wealth, sent his son as hostage for good behaviour and acknowledged the Sultan of Delhi as his overlord. Thus fell the third notable empire of the south.

Malik Kafur never hesitated to continue his military adventures when glory and wealth awaited him. "In the extreme south were rich temples and weak though wealthy kings — the Pandyas, who waged ever internecine struggle for the throne. Grasping this opportunity, Malik Kafur, bold and unscrupulous, led the army into the Pandya kingdom, plundered the temples, ravaged the territories, massacred the 'infidels' and captured Madura, the Pandyan capital. Malik Kafur returned to Delhi with 312 elephants laden with spoils, 12,000 horses, 96,000 *mans* of gold and many boxes of pearls and precious stones.

After taking the old capital of the Hoysala Ballalas at Dwara-samudram in 1310, A.D. Malik Kafur went to the Malabar coast where he erected a mosque, and afterwards returned to his master with enormous booty. Six years later Mubarak of Delhi marched to Davagiri and inhumanly flayed alive its unfortunate prince, Harapala Deva, setting up his head at the gate of his own city. In 1323 A.D. Warangal fell.

With the accession in 1325 A.D. of Muhammad bin Tuglaq of Delhi, things became worse still. There seemed to be no bound to his intolerance, ambition and ferocity. Everything therefore seemed to be leading up to only to one inevitable end—the ruin and devastation of the Hindu provinces, the annihilation of their old royal houses, the destruction of their religion, their temples and their cities. Suddenly, about the year 1344 A.D. there was a check to this wave of foreign invasion—a step—a halt—then a solid wall of opposition and for 250 years southern India was saved.

The check was caused by a combination of small Hindu States, two of them viz., Warangal and Dwara-samudram—already defeated and the third, the tiny principality of Anegundi. The solid wall con-

sisted of Anegundi grown into the great empire of the Vijayanagar. To the Kings of this house all the States of the south submitted (Sewell). There seems to be therefore a sequence of events which led gradually from efforts at protecting the Ballala kingdom to ultimately erecting a State which would offer effective opposition and save South India from Muslim conquest. The culmination is what is really to be described as the foundation of the empire, the Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar, in the South.

The actual stress of circumstances, which brought about this foundation gives us clear indication of objects which it was intended to subserve if it was to justify its having been brought into existence. The danger was real of Hindu civilisation and culture being completely overwhelmed in the new conquest and if Muhamad-bin-Tughlak had only succeeded and opportunity had been given to him for putting his imperial ideal into practice successfully we can well imagine that the south would not have been different in point of character from the North as it is actually at present.

The Islamic power in Hindustan almost collapsed and had to be revived by gradual effort from the end of the 14th century till it regained in a great measure its political power in the course of the century following. The problem for Vijayanagar therefore was immediately the keeping of the Deccan power, the Bhamani Kingdom within limits and guarding against its incursions into what was marked out as Hindu India just along the Tungabhadra-Krishna frontier.

It would not be out of place here to just notice briefly the political history after Bukka I. Bukka was succeeded by Harihara II who died in A.D. 1404. After a short dispute over the succession, Devaraya I ascended the throne in A.D. 1406 and ruled till about 1422 and was succeeded by his son Vijayaraya who occupied the throne for a short time. His son Devaraya II who succeeded him was the most distinguished ruler of the First Dynasty of the Vijayanagar sovereigns. He suffered heavy losses in men and money on account of reverses at the hands of Bhamani Sultan, who massacred the Hindu women and children without mercy and took delight in shedding of Hindu blood.

Hence Devaraya II, who realised the inferiority of the Hindu forces, and was impressed with the superiority of the Muslim cavalry, introduced reforms in the organisation of his army. His reign also was important for the literary celebrities who lived in his Court. Foreign travellers like Nicolo dei Conti, an Italian, and Abdur Razak, a Persian, visited his Court. Devaraya II was succeeded by Malli-

karjuna and he in turn was succeeded by Virupaksha who were comparatively weak rulers.

The weak rule of the two sovereigns facilitated the rise into prominence of Saluva Narasimha. He finally usurped the throne in A.D. 1485 and got himself crowned as king. He was an efficient ruler. He set upon himself the task of reorganisation of the administration of the empire and greatly succeeded in this arduous task. He was followed by Immadi Narasimha. He had his ministers Narasa Nayaka and Vira Narasimha successively. The latter usurped the throne in A.D. 1507 and after a short reign of less than 3 years bequeathed the throne to his step-brother Krishna Devaraya, perhaps the greatest and the most distinguished of the Vijayanagar kings. Vira Narasimha, though continuously engaged in warfare throughout the short period of his reign, found time to improve the efficiency of his army introducing certain changes in the methods of recruitment and training of his forces. To improve the condition of his cavalry, he offered prices to horse dealers and attracted them to Bhatkal and other Tuluva ports which he had conquered. The monopoly which the Arab and Persian merchants enjoyed heretofore was effectively broken by the Portuguese who bore no love for the Muslims. Vira Narasimha infused warlike spirit among his subjects by encouraging all kinds of military exercises. Men of different social ranks and professions became thoroughly warminded and cowardice was condemned as the most disgraceful thing among the Raya's subjects. They delighted in military exercises and flocked to the standards of the Raya to fight against the Muslims.

Vira Narasimha took keen interest in the welfare of the riots. He was ready to listen to their grievances and alleviate their distress as far as possible. One of the important reforms which he introduced to lighten their burden was the abolition of marriage tax. He was only a pioneer in this respect. The reform which he timidly introduced only in one or two localities was made applicable to almost the whole of the empire by his more illustrious younger brother and successor. The credit of initiating this popular reform, however, really belongs to Vira Narasimha, though this fact is ignored by historians.

#### *Foundation of Vijayanagar :*

Vijayanagara therefore came into existence (1) for the purpose of saving South India from being completely conquered by Muslims (2) to save Hindu religion and give it a chance for its natural development, at least in this corner of India without molestation from

outside agencies and (3) to save India's culture and learning as much as it was possible. With these objects before it, the empire came into being formally under Harihara II of Vijayanagar.

### *City of Vijayanagar :*

The name Vijayanagara is composed of two words—Vijaya, meaning "Victory" and Nagara—'City'. The idea that a new city should be built around the Hemakuta Hill had originated in the mind of Vidyaranya.

## **VIDYARANYA**

A study of the foundation of Vijayanagara is not complete without knowing the great glory of Vidyaranya. He was born—exact date is not known—some time about 1268 or 1296 A.D. He was not only the spiritual preceptor but the bearer of the burden of sovereignty of Bukka. He was a minister of Bukka I and was as Brihaspati to Indra.

This great preceptor who was also a great statesman and empire-builder did not construct a military or a commercial empire but a Hindu empire. Madhavacharya was known to the world as Vidyaranya. Madhava is an extraordinary character. His fame increases with the march of time. His encyclopaedic knowledge enabled him to comprehend the Vedas in their true light and his mastery over the subtleties of accent, his acquaintance with the nature and origin and significance of the archaic forms in which the Vedas greatly abound, his deep learning in the Vedangas, his capacity for the perception of the subtle and the indefinite and his understanding of the Hindu mode of thought and writing are unequalled.

All lovers of Dharma ought to pay homage to the memory of the great Sage Vidyaranya who had a great and preeminent part to play in the founding of the Vijayanagara Empire and thus preserved the ancient religion of the Hindus. He commanded his royal disciples Harihara and Bukka to give material shape to the idea. They obeyed his command. Harihara entrusted to his brother the task of constructing the city. Accepting the order of his guru and his sovereign, Bukka erected the new city. The testimony of tradition and inscriptions is not only not contradictory but complementary. Vidyaranya supplied the idea. Harihara gave the necessary sanction and Bukka carried it into execution. The city of Vijayanagara was built by all the three, Vidyaranya, Harihara and Bukka (History and Culture of the Indian people—Delhi Sultanate, page 323).

The following may be noted in the Bellary Gazetteer on page 260:

"If legendary History and local tradition be credited, there was a town on this site many centuries before the Kings of Vijayanagar selected it for its capital. Some of the most dramatic scenes in the great epic of Ramayana occurred at a place called Kishkinda in the poem, and it is asserted by the local Brahmins and generally acknowledged by the learned in such matters that this Kishkinda is close to Hampi".

About the year 1420 or 1421 A.D. there visited Vijayanagar one Nicolo an Italian commonly known as Nicolo dei Conti. He reached the Raya's capital, Vijayanagar which he calls "Bizenegalia" by travelling to it by land from Cambaya in Guzarat. He begins his description thus:

"The great city of Bizenegalia is situated near very steep mountains. The circumference of the city is sixty miles; its walls are carried upto the mountains and enclose the valleys at their foot, so that its extent is thereby increased." As to the appearance of the city, Nicolo continues :

"Thrice the year they keep the festivals of essential solemnity. On one of these occasions the males and females of all ages having bathed in the rivers or the sea, clothe themselves in new garments and spend three entire days in singing, dancing, and feasting. On another of these festivals they fix up within their temples and on the outside, on the roofs, an innumerable number of lamps of oil of susi—which are kept burning day and night. On the third which lasts nine days, they set up in all the highways large beams, like the masts of small ships, to the upper part of which are attached pieces of very beautiful cloth of various kinds, interwoven with gold. On the summit of each of these beams is each day a man of pious aspect, dedicated to religion, capable of enduring all things with equanimity, who is to prey for the favour of God. These men are assailed by the people, who pelt them with oranges, lemons and other odoriferous fruits, all of which they bear most patiently. There are also three fetival days, during which they sprinkle all passers by, even the king and queen themselves, with saffron water, placed for that purpose by the way-side. This is received by all with much laughter ;"

Sewell states that the first of the three festivals may be the Kanarese New Year day—which day is common to the Telugus.

The second should be the Dipavali festival and the third refers to the Mahanavami festival.

Abdul Razzak also visited the city during the reign of Devaraya II but about 20 years later than Conti. He was entrusted with an embassy from Persia and set out on his mission on January 13, A.D. 1442. His records reveal interesting readings about the famous city of Vijayanagar. He states "Roses are sold everywhere. The people could not live without roses and they look upon them quite as necessary as food ' . . Each class of men belonging to each profession has shops contiguous the one to the other—the jewellers sell publicly in the bazaars pearls, rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. In this agreeable locality, as well as in the King's palace, one sees numerous running streams and canals formed of chiselled stone, polished and smooth..... In the King's palace are several cells like basins, filled with bullion forming one mass."

Razaak's account of Mahanavami festival makes interesting reading :

"In pursuance of orders issued by the King of Bidjapur, the generals and principal personages from all parts of his empire 'presented themselves at the palace. They brought with them a thousand elephants which were covered with brilliant armour. During three consecutive months of Redjeb, the vast space of land magnificently decorated in which the enormous elephants were congregated together presented the appearance of the waves of the sea, or of that compact mass which will be assembled together at the day of resurrection. Over this magnificent space were erected numerous pavilions, to the height of three, four or even five storeys, covered from top to bottom with figures in relief. Some of these pavilions were arranged in such a manner that they could turn rapidly round and present a new face, at each moment a new chamber or a new hall presented itself to the view.

"In front of this place rose a palace with nine pavilions magnificently ornamented. In the ninth, the King's throne was set up. In the seventh was allotted a place to the humble author of this narrative—between the Palace and the pavilions—were musicians and story tellers."

Girls were there in magnificent dresses, dancing behind a pretty curtain opposite the King. There were numberless performances given by jugglers, who displayed elephants marvellously trained. During three consecutive days from sunrise to sunset, the royal festival prolonged in a style of the greatest magnificance. Fireworks,

games, amusements went on. On the third day the writer was presented to the King.

"The throne, which was of extraordinary size, was made of gold and enriched with precious stones of extreme value. During the three days the King remained seated on this cushion. When the fete of Mahanavami was ended, at the hour of evening prayer, I was introduced into the middle of four estrades, which were about ten ghez both in length and breadth (about 21 feet or 7 yards). The roof and the walls were entirely formed of plates of gold enriched with precious stones. Each of these plates was as thick as a blade of a sword, and was fastened with golden nails.

These descriptions of the travellers give us a good idea of the splendour and pomps of this great Hindu capital in the 1st half of the 15th century. Let us now, with this in our minds—return to the history of the period.

### CONSOLIDATION

Within 3 or 4 decades of its foundation, the Kings of Vijayanagara became the sole and unchallenged masters of vast portions of the south, from Goa in the west to the mouth of the Krishna and a little beyond it, in the east. Several times in its early days, the emperors failed but in the reign of the Maharajadhiraja Krishnadeva Raya and even later on till its fall in A.D. 1565, Vijayanagar played the part of an arbiter in South Indian politics. Never was such a conspicuous and important position occupied by any South Indian dynasty.

The Empire was founded for the protection of dharma, at least, such is the claim of the founders. In the whole range of South Indian History an instance of an empire founded with the purpose of giving protection to a religion irrespective of different sects has yet to be discovered. It is all-comprehensive 'Dharma' and not Hindu Dharma alone that received protection from the royal line of Vijayanagar. To the Kings of Vijayanagar, religion did not mean Saivism alone or Vaishnavism alone but it embraced all systems of religious thought. Religious practices were marked by tolerance and respect for other man's point of view.

Such a policy of tolerance was laid down in a statesmanlike manner by one of the earliest kings of the Empire. When dispute arose between the Vaishnavas and the Jains, Bukka I according to some records of 1368 A.D. (E.C. 11. S.B. 136) declared that there

was no difference between the Vaishnava Darsana (or faith) and the Jain Darsana. If loss or advancement should be caused to the Jain Darsana through the Bhaktas (Vaishnavas) the Vaishnavas will kindly deem it as loss or advancement caused to their (own Darsana). The Sri Vaishnavas will to this effect kindly set up a sasana in all the Bastis of the kingdom. For, as long as the sun and moon endure, the Vaishnava creed will continue to protect the "Jaina Darsana".

It is very difficult to find in the various records of the South Indian dynasties that ruled, an incident that can parallel this.

The policy of mutual trust and tolerance so admirably expounded by Bukka I in the early and precarious stages of the existence of the empire characterize the religious policy of the rulers who followed him (Synthesis of South Indian Culture—Fr. Heras).

This aspect of life in Vijayanagara was the admiration of various foreign travellers who visited the empire from its rise to fall and even later on. One of them by name Barbosa states. "The king allows such freedom that every man may come and go and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance and without inquiry, whether he is a Christian, Jew, Moor, or Heathen. Great equity and justice is observed by all religious; controversies and bigotry of the 12th and 13th centuries were totally absent from the 14th century onwards; thus assuring to the people a calm and prosperous existence under the aegis of the empire (Fr. Heras).

### **KRISHNADEVARAYA — A.D. 1509-1529**

On the death of Vira Narasimha, his half-brother Krishna Devāraya ascended the diamond throne. He was the contemporary of Henry VII of England. His coronation was celebrated in all probability, on the Sri Jayanti day of Saka 1432 corresponding to August 8, 1509 A.D. Krishnadevaraya did not succeed to a peaceful kingdom.

At the very outset of his reign, Krishnadevaraya was involved in war with his neighbours in the North and in Northeast. The Bhamani Sultan, Muhammad Shah, declared a Jihad on the infidels of Vijayanagar towards the end of A.D. 1509. He was joined by all chiefs and nobles who normally acknowledged his supremacy. When the Muslim army arrived at Dony on the Vijayanagar frontier, their progress was checked by the Vijayanagar forces. A fierce engagement took place in which the Bhamani forces suffered a crushing

defeat. The Sultan himself was wounded and his nobles and captains unable to face the victorious enemy beat a retreat towards Kovelakonda. Krishnadevaraya did not give up the fight. He pursued the retreating Bhamani army and forced it to fight another battle near Kovelakonda. The battle resulted once again in a victory to Vijayanagar. The battle of Kovelakonda was more disastrous in its consequences than Dony to the Bahmani kingdom. Yusuf 'Adilkhan' was killed in the fight, and the infant state of Bijapur was thrown into confusion and disorder.

Krishnadevaraya captured Raichur in A.D. 1512. Finally he reached Gulbarga and laid seige to the ancient capital of the Bhamanis for the second time. The enemy troops once again gathered strength and attacked the besiegers but were again defeated. The city was soon captured and in the words of Nuniz, it was destroyed and the fortress was razed to the ground. There is a long inscription in the temple of Varadarajaswami at Kanchi. It relates to the king first capturing Udayagiri, Bellamakonda, Vinukonda, Kondavedu and other places, then Vijayavada and Kondapalli, finally Rajahmundry.

### *Krishna Devarāya and the Portuguese :*

Krishnadevaraya maintained friendly relation with the Portuguese. He found it advantageous to cultivate their friendship because it enabled him to secure horses for his army without which he could not have waged war successfully on the Bahmani kingdom. The Portuguese, having defeated the Arab and the Persian merchants and destroyed the Egyptian Navy, established virtual monopoly over the trade in Arab and Persian horses on which depended the strength of medieval Indian armies. It was of utmost importance that Krishnadevaraya should obtain their good will and persuade them to sell him all the horses which they imported from abroad. The Portuguese, on their side, were equally anxious to secure Krishnadevaraya's favour so that they might obtain facilities for trade in the numerous towns and cities of the empire. With the accession, therefore, of Krishnadevaraya, there ensued a period of intimate inter-course between Vijayanagara and Portugal, and large numbers of Portuguese travellers, merchants and adventurers flocked to the Hindu capital and sought favours from the Raya and his courtiers. In spite of his desire to cultivate the friendship of the Portuguese, Krishnadevaraya never lent support to their political designs. Though he congratulated Alfonso d' Albuquerque on his conquest of the fort of Goa from the ruler of Bijapur, he declined to enter into an alliance with them against the Zamorin of Calicut.

When in A.D. 1523, the Portuguese conquered the mainland near Goa, he sent a small force under his minister Saluva Timma against them. The expedition was a failure and Saluva Timma, being repulsed, had to beat a hasty retreat. Krishnadevaraya was not unaware of the fighting qualities of the Portuguese. Why he sent against them only a small force, quite inadequate for the purpose, is far from clear. Krishnadevaraya probably had no intention to wage war seriously on the Portuguese. He seems to have despatched the expedition not so much to effect any territorial conquest as to notify his protest against the Portuguese aggressions on the main land. The short prelude of war, however, was soon forgotten, and as soon as the war clouds lifted normal friendly relations were resumed.

*Krishnadevaraya as a warrior and general :*

Krishnadevaraya was famous both as a warrior and General. He believed, like most of his contemporaries, that the proper place of a monarch on the battlefield was at the head of his forces. His prowess was well known, he led his armies personally, fought in front line of the battle, and won the respect of his friends and foes alike. He was a great General, and he knew how to win victories under the most discouraging circumstances. He knew no defeat. Whenever he took the command of his armies in person, he was uniformly victorious and he invariably swept away the forces arrayed against him on the battlefield. His triumphant armies entered the capitals of his enemies.

His success must be ascribed to his capacity for organization and the extra-ordinary skill which he displayed in leading his forces. He showed amazing resourcefulness in facing overwhelming obstacles besetting his path. He smashed rocks and boulders for making a road for his soldiers to reach the fort of Udayagiri, set up movable wooden platforms around Kandavidu to enable his men to fight on an equal footing with the garrison defending the fort, cut canals to drain the waters of a river swollen with floods to seize the stronghold of rebel chief of Catuir, and put to the sword his own soldiers who turned their backs on the enemy at Raichur and converted a disaster into a brilliant victory.

But even more than his personal bravery or his skilful management of troops, what enabled him to overthrow hostile forces was the devotion and attachment of his soldiers to his person. Krishnadevaraya was accustomed, after the conclusion of every battle, to go about the battlefield, looking for the wounded; he would pick them up and make arrangements to give them medical help and other

conveniences needed for their recovery. Those that specially distinguished themselves in the fight were placed directly under his supervision so that he might bestow particular attention on them and help them to regain their health as quickly as possible. The care with which Krishnadevaraya nourished the wounded soldiers and warriors did not go unrewarded. The soldiers as well as officers were perpared to throw themselves into the jaws of death in executing his commands.

### *Krishnadevaraya as an administrator :*

In spite of his incessant military activities, Krishnadevaraya paid considerable attention to the civil administration of the empire. The field of the executive authority in a Hindu State was, of course, limited by the activities of the local and communal instructions. Nevertheless, the Raya and his ministers had much to do by way of check and supervision. The maladministration of the provincial governors and officials and the strength of the Amaranayakas demanded considerable vigilance. To readress the grievances of ryots and punish the evildoers, Krishnadevaraya, following the practice of his predecessors, was in the habit of touring the empire of Vijayanagar every year, when he came into personal contact with his subjects and listened to their complaints and petitions. He took considerable interest in constructing irrigation tanks and digging canals to provide water for agricultural operations. He also abolished some of the vexatious taxes such as marriage fee and this gave immense relief to all classes of his subjects. He ordered deforestation in many parts of the country and augmented the revenue of the State by bringing fresh land under cultivation.

Krishnadevaraya was a great builder. Much of his building activity was confined to Nagalapur, a new town founded by him near Vijayanagara where he built many beautiful mansions and temples. Besides some temples in the capital, he was also responsible for the construction of many new structures in the provinces. The thousand-pillared mantapas and the Raya-Gopurams, which characterise the numerous big temples in South India, were largely built during his reign.

### *Krishnadevaraya as a patron of art and letters :*

Krishnadevaraya was a magnificent patron of art and letters. himself composed the "Amuktamalyada" in that language. His All the famous artists were in his employ to decorate his palaces and temples. His fame as patron of letters spread far and wide. He

was known as the Andhra Bhoja and true to his name, he never failed to load with presents, the numerous scholars, poets philosophers and theologians that flocked to his court in search of patronage. Krishnadevaraya extended his patronage to the writers in all languages, Sanskrit and the Kannada. Telugu received special treatment. His court became the centre of light and learning in the country. He was surrounded by poets and men of letters. His literary court was adorned by a group of eight eminent Telugu poets called the Ashta Dingajas or the elephants supporting the eight cardinal points of the literary world. Apart from the great encouragement to the Telugu poets and men of letters of his Day, Krishnadevaraya rendered an important service to the cause of Telugu literature which had far-reaching consequences. He created the ideal of a scholar-king one of whose important duties was to protect poets and men of letters and foster the growth of language and literature. It was recognised ever since by all the Telugu monarchs that one of their principal duties as rulers was to patronize Telugu poets and learned men and encourage the growth of literature. As a consequence notwithstanding the numerous political changes through which the country passed, learning flourished without hindrance.

The account of Nuniz mentions a son of Krishnadevaraya by name Tirumala Raya who was anointed as Yuvaraja even at the age of six years. He died by poison and the king charged his minister Saluva Timma, his son Timmappa and brother Govindaraja with the crime and put them into prison. Krishnadevaraya had two daughters one of whom married Rama Raya and the other Tirumala of the Aravidu dynasty.

Krishnadevaraya fell ill about the year 1529 A.D. and died soon after. He was deeply mourned by his subjects all over the empire. He was, according to his wishes, succeeded by Achyuta Raya. Dr. S. K. Aiyangar characterises Krishnadevaraya rightly as the "yet remembered ruler of a long forgotten empire."

In their commercial relations within their empire and outside there is hardly a state in the history of South India that carried so extensive a trade. From Portugal in the west to China in the east, the empire of Vijayanagar for more than three centuries carried on a busy commercial intercourse. Calicut was an important port on west coast but the empire according to the testimony of the reliable 'Obdur Razaq', had "three hundred ports each of which was equal to Calicut."

Articles of trade were of a diverse nature, trade having been carried on in rubies, pearls, and all kinds of jewels, horses, elephants, silks, and all kinds of cotton clothes, spices, drugs, iron, silver and many other articles. In this connection the political maxim followed by emperor Krishnadevaraya may be found interesting. "A King, so states the Amuktamalyada (Canto IV, v. 245) "should improve the harbours of his country and so encourage its commerce that horses and elephants, precious stones, sandal wood, pearls and other articles are freely imported into his country. He should arrange that the foreign sailors who land in his country on account of storms, illness and exhaustion are looked after in a manner suitable to their nationalities. He should set his own favourites to look after the gardens, herds of cattle and mines of the State." In another verse (V 258) it is stated, "Make the merchants of distant foreign countries who import elephants, and good horses attached to yourself by providing them with villages and decent dwellings in the city by affording them daily audience, presents and allowing decent profits. Then these articles will never go to your enemies."

It was this benevolent policy of the rulers that attracted the Arab and Portuguese merchants to the empire. There is some truth in what Barbosa says viz. "There is an infinite trade in this city and strict justice and truth are observed towards all by the governors of the country (Stanley's translation, p. 86) (Rev. Heras).

In the rapid survey of the history of Vijayanagar, in its cultural aspect we brought home that it stood as the bulwark of Hinduism for more than two and a half centuries. In the protection it afforded to Hindu culture, the encouragement it gave to art and literature, the fostering care with which it looked after the prosperity of its subjects many times harassed, often beaten, though always holding their own against the Muhamadan, Vijayanagar affords a noble example of a great empire.

Its policy of religious toleration and non-intervention in social affairs deserve the greatest praise. Being an empire founded chiefly for the protection of Dharma, it proved to be the asylum of the much harassed Hindus who looked upon its rulers as the true representatives of all that was noble in Hindu culture. So perfectly did the empire represent the ancient glory of Hinduism that we can with ample justification say that it stands out as a synthesis of Hindu culture.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

The foundation of the empire was not without certain principles which the founders and their successors had in view. It must be remembered that the invaders in their early career had no idea of territorial conquests but were impelled by a love of gold of the southern kingdoms and the fanatic zeal to spread Islam. They had found that the plunder and defilement of the rich temples of the South would achieve their double object.

The founders believed that their Swadharma could be protected only by establishing Swarajya. To check the spread of the disruptive influences in South India and subdue the enemies of Hinduism and nourish the political, religious, social, educational and economic institutions in the country were some of the laudable aims of the empire-builders. We find later that similar ideas of Svadharma and Svarajya influenced the actions of Sivaji and his followers and led to the rise of the Maratha kingdom. Sivaji is believed to have taken Ramaraya, the Vijayanagara king who was slain in the battle of Talikota or Raksa Tangadi in 1565 A.D. as his ideal and worked hard at the establishment of a Hindu kingdom. This resulted in developing the great Maratha power.



## CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The formation of a strong Central Government was a special feature of the Vijayanagara Empire. The king was the head of the monarchical institution. He occupied a supreme position in the State and he was in short the pivot of the administration. But the working of a monarchical form of Government largely depends on the personality of the Sovereign. According to ancient Hindu political thinkers the State consisted of seven elements of which the King was the most important. In the *Mastyapurana*, ch. 220, v. 19, the seven elements of the State are laid down (1) Svamin (lord) (2) Amatya (minister) (3) Janapada (territory) (4) Durga (fort) (5) Kosa (treasury) (6) Danda (army) and (7) Mitra (ally). The royal poet emphasises the fact that the emperor (Sarvabhauma) should be able to enforce his commands (*Amuktamalyada*, canto. 4, v. 206). The ministers appear to have had a voice in the selection of the King and they had the coronation of the King performed. The coronation had an important constitutional significance. In the Vedic period the King took an oath that he would rule his people justly and according to the rules of Dharma. Similarly the Kings of Vijayanagara took the oath

the spirit of which was the same. The occasion was one of mirth and joy and the Kings then made large grants to temples and learned men.

The Vijayanagar kings appointed their successors and anointed them as Yuvarajas during their own lifetime. A copper plate grant of Harihara II States that Harihara appointed Bukka as Yuvaraja.

### *Regency :*

An important problem connected with the Central Government relates to regency. When the occupant of the throne happened to be a minor, a regent was nominated and entrusted with the administration of the empire in the name of the young ruler until the latter should come of age and take up the reigns of Government into his own hands. After the death of Narasa, his son Vira Narasimha acted as the regent for some time but later he usurped the throne and founded the Tuluva line of Kings, of which the greatest was Krishnadevaraya.

### *Divine origin of the Kings :*

“No king, without having the aspect or amsa of Vishnu” i.e., a King is the incarnation of Vishnu. Confining our attention to the Vijayanagar State, we note that the first and the primary duty of the king was to afford protection to all his subjects and redress their grievances. Only when peace reigns, there can be any progress in any land.

The Vijayanagar empire was founded to stem the tide of Muslim aggression and the other aim was to maintain law and order in the country by organising an efficient police organisation in the State. Krishnadevaraya desires that the Kings should always be anxious to protect their subjects and redress their grievances.

More than this elementary duty of the State was the preservation of social solidarity of the people by enforcing on them the duty of the observance of their Swadharma based on custom and the immemorial authorities of the Vedas. The appointment of Samayacharyas by Vijayanagar kings indicates fully the vigour with which the kings enforced swadharma on the respective castes and communities in the realm. They also enabled the Mutts to function by giving financial aid. But the kings were never the ecclesiastical or religious heads. They were only anxious to maintain the social solidarity of the empire and anxious to ensure peace and prosperity in the realm.

The distinctions and differences in social life continued and they were not levelled up. The occupational differences could not be obliterated easily in those mediaeval times.

Economic prosperity of the people was the first concern of the Vijayanagar emperors. They knew that the public weal greatly depended on agricultural prosperity and flourishing trade. Under them shrubs were brought under cultivation. Where these were not possible, irrigation facilities were afforded, the burden of taxation was lightened and the net yield of the land was sought to be increased. Trade with foreign countries was encouraged. Immigrants from foreign countries were afforded protection in a manner suitable to their nationalities. Foreign merchants were helped to settle in the capital and were provided facilities in the villages and decent dwellings in the city. Mining was an industry undertaken by the State.

Another important function of the King was the proper administration of justice. Probably they believed in the theory of "King can do no wrong". The King was the highest court of appeal and when the lower courts failed to do justice to the parties, the sufferer could directly appeal to the king who dispensed justice. Cruel punishments were generally deprecated (Amukta malyada, canto IV, v. 252).

The Vijayanagar king, like all the ancient kings of India, was not a law-maker. The laws were already in existence which the king was to obey and execute. Krishnadevaraya insists on the protection of Dharma by the ruling sovereigns. The royal poet says "A crowned king should always rule with an eye towards Dharma, the lives of Gods like Indra, Varuna, Vaisravana, Vayu and Agni all the results of their actions. The various worlds as Bhuh, Bhuvah and Suvah owe their positions to Dharma."

There were many checks on the authority of the Kings. One of them was the organised community itself. The modern trade unions, professional societies and citizens' leagues were not unknown in the medieval India. The Central Government was content with the supervisory control over them. Radhakumud Mukherji rightly observes, "it is the quasive instinctive postulates, and conventions of group-life which come to be formulated as law and not in the mandate, command or decree of a single central authority in the State. Law, under these conditions, is not an arte-fact but a natural growth of consensus and communal life."

An interesting inscription from Virinchipuram in the North Arcot District describes a regulation made by a few communities for themselves. The representatives of the Brahmans of the Kingdom of Padavidu among whom Karnataka, Tamil, Telugu and Lata Brahmans are mentioned, signed an agreement to the effect that henceforth marriages among their families had only to be concluded by Kanyadana, i.e. that the father had to give his daughter to the bridegroom gratuitously, and that both the father who accepted money and the bridegroom who paid money for the bride should be punished by the King and excommunicated from their caste. Thus the communities made regulations for themselves and the King's duty was only to enforce them.

The levying of fresh taxes was opposed by the people. In the history of Vijayanagar empire we see, people opposing fresh taxes evacuating their occupied territories in a peaceful and silent way.

An incomplete record coming from Tiruvannainallur in the South Arcot District states that as the shepherds in charge of the temple cattle in Tiruvadisirmai were unable to pay the *sadakkadamai* tax and migrated to other places, their tax was reduced by Aramvalarta Nayanar, the agent of Narasa Nayaka to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  panams per year per payir, a particular unit (450 of 1921). Finding that public opinion was not in favour of the continuation of the marriage tax payable by the bride and bridegroom at the time of the marriage of a virgin, the enlightened Krishnadevaraya remitted it. There are many records which praise not only the king but also the local influential people for this remission. (387 of 1904).

An important check upon the royal authority was the royal council. The council seems to have consisted of two classes of advisers (a) the Prime Minister and the other heads of the Departments and (b) a few blood relations of the King. If these two classes of members had seats in the State Council, then the estimate of Nuniz that the King had twenty ministers cannot be wrong.

The ancient Indian niti writer insisted upon the cabinet being small; Kautilya says for instance that the council should not consist of more than three or four councillors. (Artha Sastra, Book I, ch. 15). In times of war when action was more important than deliberation, the council must be as small as possible.

A high qualification was expected of the minister. A minister was to be a scholar, and afraid of *adharma*, well versed in *rajaniti* between the ages of fifty and seventy and healthy in body and one whose connection with the king had come down from previous gene-

rations and who was not conceited . Krishnadevaraya asserts that under such a minister the angas of a King (the attributes of royalty) would increase in a single day.

Generally, the King chose his ministers and in that choice their previous connection with the royal house was taken into consideration. Krishnadevaraya insists on the previous connection of the minister with the ancestor of the ruling king. Many of the Vijayanagara ministers were in office during the reigns of successive kings. Mudda Dandanatha was the prime minister both under Bukka I and Harihara II. Similarly Sayana was the minister of both Bukka I and Harihara II. Nagappa Dannayaka who was a minister of Deva-  
raya I continued to be the minister of Devaraya II. Thus we see several instances, where one individual was minister under successive kings. But ministers and kings did not always continue to be on friendly terms. Krishnadevaraya in a fit of fury blinded and put into prison not only Saluva Timma, his trusted minister, but also his son Timmanna Dannayaka and brother Govindaraja suspecting them of having murdered his young son Tirumala.

The members of the council anointed the king and guided the administration. Under weak kings, its influence and power were great for it had complete control over the policy of the state. Even, the strong and able monarch, Krishnadevaraya, felt that the council was too powerful and the king was a puppet in its hand. The king felt that he was a toy in the hands of his ministers and is said to have exclaimed in one of his soliloquies: "I am sitting on the throne, but the world is ruled by the ministers; Who listens to my words?" (Rayavachakamu, Journal of the Telugu Academy, p. 30).

The Pradhani, the forerunner of the Maratha Peshwa, had a very important place in the State. Paes writes about Saluva Timma, the great minister of Krishnadevaraya as follows: "He commands the whole household and to him all the greatest lords act as to the king." Nuniz also observes that Saluva Timma was the principal person in the kingdom. The Pradhani remitted taxes and appointed the governors of provinces. The Mahapradhani appears to have been assisted by an Upapradhani in the administration of the vast empire.

One Somarasa was, for instance, the Upapradhani when Saluva Timma was the prime minister of Krishnadevaraya. Another inscription S. 1450 (A.D. 1528-29) mentions one Viranarasimharaya Nayaka, son of Taluvakkulaindan Bhattar as the Ubhayapradhani.

## SECRETARIAT

The Vijayanagar Empire was a vast and extensive one. The details of administration cannot be looked into by the king and his council alone. There must be a secretariat consisting of several grades of officers working in the several departments of administration. Each department in the secretariat was in charge of a particular person. Abdur Razaak who saw the working of the secretariat at the imperial headquarters has a few words to say about it. He says "On the right hand side of the Palace of the Sultan (Vijayanagar emperor) there is Diwan Khana or ministers' office which is extremely large, and presents the appearance of a (chilnal situn or) forty-pillared hall; and in front of it there runs a raised gallery, higher than the stature of a man, thirty yard long and six broad, where the records are kept and scribes are seated. Krishnadevaraya also appears to have understood the value of a big secretariat, for, he says in his Amuktamalyada: "When the work of a single (subordinate) officer is entrusted to a number of men and when each of them is assisted by his friend the business of the State may easily be accomplished. Their satisfaction (with the king) increases or decreases with the increase or decrease of their number. Nothing can be achieved without the willing co-operation of several officers to keep them docile and obedient. Truthfulness and the absence of ingardliness and cruelty are helpful."

## RAYASAM

An office called Rayasam, which is a popular form of Vrayasam, meaning literally the profession of writing, was in existence during the period of Vijayanagar. The office was probably a small secretariat attached to the person of the king. Persons attached to the department rose to high positions and became ministers of State. Nuniz refers to the Rayasams as 'Secretaries' and gives an account of their duties. The Vijayanagar sovereigns never issued written orders to their governors or servants, nor did they make grants in writing. But they had their own 'secretaries' who wrote what the kings said and the favours they bestowed. Nuniz gives us a clear description of how the order of the king was carried out. He says: "When (he) the king confers a favour on any one, it remains written in the registers of his secretaries. The king, however, gives the recipient of the favour a seal impressed in wax from one of his rings which the minister keeps and these seals serve for Letters Patent.

These secretaries who always remained with the kings and noted all he said or did, resemble Tiruvaykelvis of the Chola inscriptions

who had similar duties to discharge. The evidence of epigraphy corroborates the prevalence of this practice in the Vijayanagara days. An inscription at Tirukkivilur in the South Arcot district registers that certain lands in the three banks out of 12 banks in the village (Tirukkoyilur) were sold at a loss to the temple of Tiruvidaikalinayanar by the tenants, owing to their inability to pay the taxes and that when Immadi Narasa Nayaka visited the temple on a Dvadasī day, he made these lands tax free, and ordered the profits thereon to be utilised for offerings and worship to the Góḍ on certain days every month.

Immadi Narasayyadeva and Vira Narasayya Pallavarayan are mentioned as the king's secretaries to whom the above oral orders were given.

Karanikkam is another office which is frequently mentioned in Vijayanagar inscriptions. The word Karanikkam means an accountant. There was scarcely an institution or office during the Vijayanagara times which was without its staff of Karanikkams.

Let us now see some of the functions of the departments and their achievements.

## AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION

Even to this day, about 70% of the population depend on agriculture for their livelihood. The important Indian manufacturers largely depend on large agricultural production, the purchasing power of the people depends on it, the Indian trade, both the export and import depends on it; and finally the soundness of the finances of the Government of India largely depends on agricultural prosperity.

Among the agents of production land is the most important. It appears that the extent of land under agriculture was not as much as it is at the present day. However, the available evidence shows that the land under cultivation in South India in the Vijayanagara days was usually very fertile, capable of giving abundant crops. According to Abdur Razak, in Vijayanagar "most of the land was well tilled and fertile". Barbosa observes that the Kingdom of Narasinga was very rich and well supplied with provisions and all the country was very fertile and brought under cultivation. This same fact is echoed by Paes who observes that the dominions (the Vijayanagara empire) were very well cultivated and very fertile. The impression is confirmed by the inscriptions of the period which refer to the rearing of two or three crops on a piece of land which could not have been possible unless it was fertile and had ample irrigational facilities.

We have contemporary account in the chronicle of Paes of the construction of a big tank by Krishnadevaraya, near his capital to provide irrigation to the fields and to supply water to the new city of Nagalapura founded by him. The chronicler says: "The king made a tank there, which as it seems to me has the width of a falcon shot and it is at the mouth of two hills so that all the water that comes from either one side or the other, collects there; and besides this, water comes to it from more than three leagues by pipes which run along the lower parts of the range outside. This water is brought from a lake which itself overflows into a little river. The tank has three large pillars handsomely carved with figures; these connect above with certain pipes by which they get water when they have to irrigate their gardens and rice fields. In order to make this tank, the said king broke down a hill which enclosed the ground occupied by the said tank. In the task I saw so many people at work that there must have been fifteen or twenty thousand men looking like ants so that you cannot see the ground on which they walked, so many there were; this tank, the king portioned out among his captains each of whom had the duty of seeing that the people placed under him did their work and the tank was finished and brought to completion" (Sewell, pp. 245-6). Referring to the construction of the same tank, Nuniz says that the emperor was assisted in the work by Jao-della-poute, a Portuguese worker in stone. As a result of this great irrigation project many improvements were made in the city and many rice fields and gardens were irrigated.

In 1369 A.D. Bhaskara Bavadura, a prince of the first Vijayanagar dynasty, constructed a huge tank with many sluices in the modern Cuddapah District. These examples are only illustrative and not exhaustive.

In India provision for the supply of water has been considered to be an act of charity and it is said that as the water of a tank serves to nurture both movable and immovable creation on the earth even Brahma is not able to recount the merit accruing from it (E.I., Vol. XIV, p. 94). The Vijayanagar kings, realising the importance of the irrigational facilities, provided storage tanks or tank irrigation, river or canal and dam works, and well and lift works.

Krishnadevaraya, for instance, states in his Amuktamalyada, that the extent of a State is the root cause of its prosperity, and that if it is small, its prosperity would increase only when tanks and irrigation canals are constructed and favour is shown to the poor cultivators in the matter of taxation and services (Amukta, Canto IV, verse 236).

The Vijayanagar sovereigns not only constructed irrigation tanks and canals but also encouraged private initiative in this con-

nection in different ways. Further they took adequate steps to keep them under good repair and maintenance.

About the irrigation policy of the Vijayanagar kings, Crole says: "Many of them (irrigation works) now abandoned or in ruins, evince the solitude of those ancient monarchs for the extension of cultivation even in tracts not favourably natural position or the quality of the soil. Almost every catchment basin, however small, still bears traces of having been bunded across and in many instances this was done in order to secure a crop of paddy on a few acres of stony ungenerous soil, to which all the fostering care of the British administration has failed to induce cultivation to return. Large and more expensive projects were not neglected. Even some of them bear witness to the enlightenment of those Hindu kings, while the absence of scientific instruments in those remote times compels the astonishment of the beholder." Referring to the anicuts constructed in the Vijayanagar period, Major Henderson remarks: "The position for the anicuts have been chosen with great judgement and the channels have been formed with consummate skill."

Likewise the words of Sir Thomas Munro about the irrigation systems under the Vijayanagar kings in the area around Vijayanagar may be noted. He says: "To attempt the construction of new tanks is perhaps a more hopeless experiment than the repair of those which have been filled up, for there is scarcely any place where a tank can be made to advantage that has not been applied to this purpose by the inhabitants."

#### *Agricultural Produce — Rice :*

Rice being the staple food of the people, it was the principal crop grown and that on a large scale. While white rice was consumed by the richer classes, red rice or black rice according to Barbosa was consumed by the poorer classes. Barbosa says that the latter was better and more wholesome than the white. Kinds of rice grown were girsal, asal, kuruvai etc.

The cereals, such as wheat, barley, varagu and tinai occupied the second place of importance in agriculture as they continue to do even today. Wheat, according to Barbosa, was grown on the Coromandel coast only on a small scale while much was produced in Gujarat and elsewhere.

### **INDUSTRIES**

The Industrial organisation of the country in the Vijayanagara period was so widespread and the products were made in such abun-

dance that the country was as a whole self-sufficient. A comparative study of the industrial position of South India in the Vijayanagara period with that of Europe of the same period leaves on us the general impression that "in the matter of industry, India was more advanced relatively to Western Europe than she is today (Morland: India at the death of Akbar, pp. 155-56).

Industries that thrived are :—

(1) Agricultural manufactures like sugar. According to Barbosa, it was in a powdered condition, for the people knew, "not how to make it into loaves and they wrap it up in small packets as it is in powder." Besides sugar of this kind, palm-sugar or jaggery was also manufactured in some places.

Dyeing industry was in a flourishing state, Indigo was largely employed in the west coast.

The cocoanut tree was important for many agricultural industries that depended on it. Articles produced from it were—oil, coir, toddy, palm sugar, mat, umbrella, brushes etc. Toddy was the wine of the country and was in large demand.

## 2. *Mines and Metallurgy :*

Various kinds of diamonds and precious stones were got from mines. Much of the mineral in the Vijayanagara Empire was got from the mines in the Kurnool and Anantapur districts and particularly Vajra Karur. The Vijayanagara sovereign had such a large accumulation of gold that a separate golden treasury was maintained by the government.

Iron mines were largely found in the modern Mysore State. The other minerals that were dug out from earth were sulphur and copper. Salt, being an article in great demand, was produced in a large scale in the coastal areas. Metal works consisted in making of (a) jewellery (b) weapons of war and (c) household articles.

Copper was used on a large scale for minting coins. The sword, hilts, according to Barbosa, were inlaid with ivory.

Vehicles of transport such as carriages and palanquins were made of wood. The use of bullocks for purposes of conveying goods and men from place to place presupposes the existence of such wheeled carriages.

### *Masonry :*

The building industry was a flourishing one in the period particularly in the urban areas, though the masses appear to have lived only in houses of mud or reeds with thatch, the others, the middle classes, aristocrats and royalty lived in houses built of bricks. Besides, the construction and renovation of temples and the execution of irrigation projects in different parts of the empire kept the building industry active.

### *Textiles :*

Cotton textile was manufactured on a large scale at Kan-pamei, a city 167 miles from Calicut and identified with modern Coimbatore. Both at that place and in surrounding area a kind of cloth, Chihli, (Chih-li-pu) was made and was sold for eight or ten gold pieces. Besides raw silk was prepared for the loom, dyed in different colours, and woven into various flowered patterns made up into pieces of four to five feet in width and twelve to thirteen feet in length (Mahuan, JRAS, 1896 p. 845).

On the east coast, Pulicat was a great centre of textile manufacture where were made large quantities of printed cotton cloth "worth much money". Around Goa much cotton was grown of which very fine cloth was made. The different communities that were engaged in the textile industry were the Kaikkolas and Saliyas. The tailoring industry with the Vastra rakhakas (tailors) was also flourishing.

In some places the community of artisans migrated to seek work at places where they could get something, the Sourashtras, for instance, who migrated to Vijayanagar and Madurai in search of habitation and employment. Likewise the Pattunulkaras were the weavers who migrated to Madurai and found employment there. The temples encouraged the settlement of weavers in their precincts and promoted the weaving industry.

### *Revenue Administration :*

Inscriptions are our main source for the study of the revenue system under the Vijayanagar Kings. Almost every Vijayanagar inscription refers to some assignment of land, remission of the revenues, income from land, levy of fresh taxes or the renewal of obsolete ones.

Revenues were got from several heads of taxation viz.

- (1) The land Tax.
- (2) Tax on Property.
- (3) Commercial Taxes.
- (4) Professional taxes.
- (5) Taxes on Industries.
- (6) Military Contribution.
- (7) Social and Communal taxes.
- (8) Judicial Fines, etc., and
- (9) Miscellaneous items of income.

As the tax on land is important even today, I propose to discuss it in detail.

Wilks when discussing this question remarks that in the early days of the Vijayanagar dynasty Harihara's Minister Vidyaranya, published for the use of the officers of State, a manual founded on the text of Parasara with a copious commentary in which the assessment of the land and the conversion of the grain revenue into money are elaborately dealt with. Briefly stated, he took the sastra rate of one-sixth of the crop as the government share and assuming that the average outturn was twelve times the seed sown, he distributed 30 kuttis of paddy, the produce from  $8\frac{1}{2}$  kuttis of land as follows :

To the lord $\frac{1}{4}$	...	$7\frac{1}{2}$
To the cultivator $\frac{1}{2}$	...	15
To Sarkar $\frac{1}{6}$	...	5
To temples $\frac{1}{30}$	...	1
To Brahmans $\frac{1}{20}$	...	$1\frac{1}{2}$
		—
Total 30 Kuttis.		—

The shares of the temples and the brahmans were collected by the Sarkar and paid over by it.

Department of Taxation was known as the *atharyana* and was presided over by the Minister for Revenue. Regarding the burden of taxation Sir Thomas Monroe in one of his letters observes,

“However light India revenue may be in the books of their sages, only a sixth or fifth in practice it has always been heavy.”

The few imperfect records which have reached us of the revenues of Vijayanagar, the last of the Hindu Power, do not show that the assessment was lighter under that government than under its Muhammadan successors.

None can dispute that at certain periods of Vijayanagar history the taxes were heavy. The financial year in the Vijayanagara days, commenced in September—October, when Mahanavami was celebrated for nine days. Probably Vijayadasami day was their new year day. Nuniz says : “According to the lands, revenues that they have to pay, the King settles for them.”

### EXPENDITURE

In all Hindu empires, the cash expenditure of the government on account of administration was considerably small. The administration was conducted on traditional lines, and there was no necessity for the payment of all the officers of the State. They were generally paid in shape of grants of Sarvamanyams which they enjoyed without paying tax to the government or certain specified taxes were made over to them. The humble servants of the government were granted likewise service Inams and Manyams which they also enjoyed tax free as remuneration for their services. The right of policing (Padi-kaval) was largely leased out to the local people, who vied with one another for securing that right for themselves. Disputes, both civil and criminal, were generally decided locally by castemen and the Village elders and seldom reached the royal court. Hence there was no regular gradation of courts of justice maintained at the expense of the government.

Unlike in the modern days, in the mediæval period education was largely a private concern. People felt a liberal education was not a necessity in those days for the choice of occupation was dependent on caste. Thus the government did not incur much expenditure on these accounts.

Vijayanagara kings did not try to maintain a huge naval force which, if they had organised, would have consumed a great portion of their financial resources. The military swallowed a considerable portion of the revenue for defence of the country was of utmost importance. In the Amuktamalyada we read (Canto. IV V 263), “the expenditure of money which is utilised in buying elephants and horses in feeding them, in maintaining soldiers, in the worship of

Gods and Brahmans and in one's own enjoyment can never be called an expenditure. There was a constant menace of the wars with Bahmani Sultans; Within the dominions, there were the rebellious and refractory feudal chiefs showing insubordination to the established authority, and to counteract these malevolent force, Vijayanagar government had to incur a large military expenditure.

Nuniz notes that "of these sixty lakhs that the King has of revenue every year, he does not enjoy a larger sum than twenty five lakhs, for the rest is spent on his horses and elephants and foot soldiers and cavalry whose cost he defrays. Krishnadevaraya for instance purchased horses from the Arabs at competitive price to strengthen his army. Vijayanagar kings had a standing army at the capital ever ready for wars. It is interesting to note here in passing that this standing army of the Kings was only a fraction of the huge armies that were collected at times of war, for the latter were composed not only of this regular standing army but also of the feudal levies.

The next large item of public expenditure was that on the public endowments and charities. No temple escaped the attention of the Kings, and no public institution failed to get their fostering care. Inscriptions are scattered throughout South India which recorded the benefactions of the Vijayanagara kings. They constructed new temples, renovated large number of old ones renewed grants already made, and instituted festivals and worship in temples. The ruling Kings took interest in learned philosophical discussions and honoured the scholars by giving them rich presents and granting them tax-free villages. The next important item of expenditure was in the direction of irrigation and public works. The period of the Vijayanagar supremacy was marked by the construction of tanks and lakes and the making of large irrigation works for agricultural purposes. Architecture, sculpture and painting also received great encouragement.

### *Architecture and Art :*

The Vijayanagar kings evolved a district school of Architecture, which used the most difficult material with success and were served by a brilliant company of sculptors and painters. Enough of the sculpture survives to show its quality and the paintings necessarily have disappeared. The descriptions recorded by the Portuguese authors and Abdur Razak permit of no doubt, that the painters in the service of the Kings of Vijayanagar attained a high degree of skill. The scenes from the Ramayana, sculptured on bas-relief on the walls of Krishnadevaraya's chapel Royal, the Hazara Ramaswami temple, built in 1513 are much admired. No adequate account of the

buildings and sculptures at Vijayanagar has yet been prepared. Such a work, properly illustrated, would fill several large volumes.

Foreign visitors or travellers who visited Vijayanagar were struck by the number and riches of the harem. It was an age of pageantry, pomp and show. Much money was wasted in dress, in drinks and on women.

People in ancient and medieval days had no banking facilities. So the people and the government hoarded the precious metals. Krishnadevaraya in his *Amuktamalyada* (Canto IV-V. 238) divides the King's income into four parts, and says that one part should be used for extensive benefaction and for enjoyment, two parts for the maintenance of a strong army and one part added Kings hoarded wealth. He says : "The previous Kings of this place for many years past have held it a custom to maintain a treasury, which after the death of each, is kept locked and sealed in such a way that it cannot be seen by any one, nor do the Kings who succeed to the kingdom open them or see what is in them. They are not opened except when the Kings have great need and the Kingdom has no great supplies to meet its needs. This King (Krishnadevaraya) has made his treasury different from those of the previous King, and he puts in it every year the million Pardos without taking from them one Pordo more than for the expenses of his house, from this you will be able to judge how great is the richness of this kingdom and how great the treasure that this King has amassed."

This money may be said to consist of national emergency fund to meet the large demands when wars broke out or to take measures for the alleviation of the sufferings of the people from floods or famine. There seem to have been two treasuries (1) the golden treasury and (2) diamond treasury.

### *Coins and Currency :*

The economic condition of a country is generally reflected in the currency system. In South India it became well regulated. "The matrix was adopted to the exclusion of the punch. A uniform weight standard of the Pagodas was introduced, the shape and metallic value of the different coins were fixed and the coinage in general was subdivided into several denominations."

There were in circulation a large number of coins of different denominations. They are :

Gold (1) Gadyana, Varaha, Pon, Pagoda.

(2) Pratap

(3) Kati

(4) Pana

(5) Haja

Silver (1) Tara

Copper (1) Pana

(2) Jital

(3) Kasu

The central mint was an important department of administration. Private individuals were granted the right of issuing coins and owning private mints.

An idea of the wealth of Vijayanagar may be had from Hindu camp at the battle of Raksa Tangdi. The plunder was so great "that every private man in the allied army became rich in gold, jewels, effects, tents, arms, horses and slaves" and after the defeat, "five hundred and fifty elephants laden with treasure in gold, diamonds and precious stones valued at more than a hundred million sterling \* \* \* \* left the city.

## SOCIETY

The vast empire of Vijayanagara was composed of a large number of communities and social groups the traditional four castes and each multiplied into various sub-castes and communities, many of them quarrelling among themselves for particular rights and privileges often customary in nature.

A marked feature of the social history of the later Vijayanagar period is the rise of social consciousness among the different communities of the empire. There was an evolution taking place for the social solidarity among themselves. Each community clamoured for certain special privileges and honours which were to mark it off from the others.

Among the social institutions in any country, that of marriage is the most important. Though marriage is a religious sacrament among the Hindus, great social importance has come to be attached to it. Ancient Sanskrit literature speaks of eight kinds of marriages, there is no evidence to show that all of them existed in Vijayanagar

days. Kanyadana was the only form of marriage that was widespread and popular.

The performance of Sati was commemorated by the erection of what are known as Satikals on which are seen sculptured representation of the widows who committed Sati on the death of their husbands.

Sahagamana, whether it was voluntary or compulsory leads us to an examination of an equally important question—the removal of the hair by the widow on the death of her husband.

This is a curious custom that has crept into Hindu society especially among the brahmans. From what Barbosa writes about this practice it is clear that those who did not perform Sahagamana were held in great dishonour and their kindred shaved their heads and turned them away as disgraced and a shame to the families.

One of the important festivals in which the presence of the King was essential was the Mahanavami. The festival, originally religious in character, slowly gathered some political and social significance. The King presided over the function which lasted for nine days. On all the nine days there were performances like dance, wrestling and many other amusements. "Apparel of proclaims the man"—Now let us see what kind of dress the people of Vijayanagar wore. About this we got some accounts from foreign travellers. The well-to-do people in the empire wore "certain clothes, as a girdle below wound very tightly in many folds and short white shirts of silk or coarse brocade which are gathered between thighs but open in front." On their heads they carried small turbans. Some wore silk or brocade caps. Wool was very rarely used, perhaps on account of the great heat of the country. Some of the people used rough shoes without stockings. But the ordinary people did not use shoes. The higher classes of people used umbrellas.

About the dress of women Barbosa says : "The women wear white garments of very thin cotton, or silk of bright colours, five yards long; one part of which is girt round them below and the other part they threw over one shoulder and across their breasts in such a way that one arm and shoulder remain uncovered. They wore leather shoes well embroidered in silk; their heads are uncovered and the hair is tightly gathered into a becoming knot on the top of the head. Many people in the country wore jewels and ornaments "in their ears and around their necks, arms, wrists and fingers" (Elliot, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 109).

## PRICES

There is abundant evidence to show that the prices of articles were very low in the Vijayanagar Empire. Even in the middle of the fourteenth century, Vijayanagar had won a name as a rich country well supplied with all good things. Nikitin remarks about Calicut that every thing was cheap there.

Vasco-de-gama is more explicit on the point. He says that corn was available in abundance at Calicut and that bread sold at three reals (less than a penny) and was sufficient for the daily sustenance of a man. He adds: "Rice, likewise, is found in abundance . . . . a very fine shirt which in Portugal fetches three hundred reis was worth here only two fanaos which is equivalent to thirty reis." Barbosa found rice selling cheap in the country. Paes also bears testimony to the cheapness of the articles in Vijayanagara. He describes it as the best provided city in the world and stocked with provisions such as rice, wheat, grains, Indian corn and certain amount of barley, beans, pulses, horse grain and many other seeds which grow in the country, and says that they were all very cheap. Fowls were sold at the rate of three per vintem (1'7 d) within the city while outside four could be had for the sum. Likewise a vintem fetched six or eight partridges or twelve to fourteen doves. Grapes were available in large quantities and sold at three bunches a fanam or hana and pomegranates at ten a fanam. Similarly sheep were sold cheap, for in the city markets, twelve live sheep could be had for a Pardao while in the hills the same coin would fetch fourteen or fifteen sheep. If the salaries paid to the humbler servants of the government can have any relation to the general level of prices of the articles of daily consumption by them, the conclusion is inevitable that they sold cheap for, in the Vijayanagar days a knight with a horse and a slave girl was expected to live on a monthly allowance of four or five Pardaos or twenty-two rupee eight annas or twenty five rupees."

## LECTURE III

### DECLINE OF VIJAYANAGAR

Before we speak of the decline of Vijayanagar, we may usefully study the military organisation in the empire.

The permanent army in the King's pay is said to have numbered, 'a oillion fighting troops, in which an included 35,000 cavalry in acout.' On a special occasion the sovereign could raise a second million, Paes declared that in 1520 A.D. Krishnadevaraya actually assembled for the operations against Raichur 703,000 foot, 32,600 horse and 551 elephants, besides an unaccounted host of camp-followers, dealers, and the rest. The statement of Megasthense that Chandragupta Maurya in the fourth century B.C. kept and paid 600,000 foot, 30,000 horse and 9,000 elephants, besides chariots, may be compared (Vincent Smith). Chariots had gone out of use before the times of the Rayas. The efficiency of the huge army was not proportionate to the numbers of the force. The men are described as being physically strong and individually brave. Sometimes, the fought gallantly but the army as an organised force was not quite efficient. Devaraya II effected some improvements to secure the efficiency of his army but that was not enough.

Further, the fact that a large number of courtezans were officially attached to the force, must have contributed not a little to the inefficiency of the Hindu armies. Again, Barbosa says that the King ordered the men to take their families with them under the idea that men fight better if they have the responsibility of wives and children and household goods on them' (Barbosa I, p. 225).

This was a mistaken notion for really their presence in the battlefield could not have infused courage into the soldiers but only have contributed much to their inefficiency. Disaster was sure to await an army which had a large number of women in its midst. It must be admitted that the Hindus were not the only people who laboured under this disadvantage, for, the Muslims also had similar disabilities.

There was a naval department but not very large as required large sums of money to build a big and efficient navy. It was under the guidance of the Pradhani or under the supervision of the commander-in-chief. Without a navy it would not have been possible to reduce parts of Ceylon and Burma to subjection for sometime.

The character of the wars in mediæval India, was more or less, based on revenge, so much so, the high ideals found in the Sastric texts did not guide the actual policy of either Vijayanagar Kings or their Muslim opponents.

But Krishnadevaraya was an exception to the generality of rulers. He was disposed to treat the women of the enemies' harem that fell into his hands with regard. He says in his *Amuktamalyanda*: "Capture the territory as well as the fortresses of your enemies. If the harem of the enemy chances to fall in your hands see that they are looked after as if they were with parents" (*Amukta—Canto IV V. 267*).

In the course of his wars against Gajapathi, Krishnadevaraya made many captives among whom was the wife of the King of Orissa. But later, according to the terms of the treaty concluded between the two rulers, Krishnadevaraya restored the "wife" to Gajapathi.

Krishnadevaraya gives certain concrete suggestions for the policy to be followed towards neighbouring states and their officers. He says: "If you think that the holder of foreign fortress on your frontier can easily be worsted then it is fit to overcome him. If you do not think so the best course is to make friendship with him. Of what use is the holder of a foreign (enemy) fortress when the governor of your own fortress is your enemy? The fortress should be protected for his own sake". (*Amukta. — Canto V, V 286*).

Military stations or cantonments (*padaiparrus*) were also established at important places to maintain order and peace in the empire.

The military organisation of the Vijayanagara Kings was supplemented by an elaborate system of secret service. In Vijayanagar these secret agents travelled everywhere and gathered information about the condition of the enemy states and carried news to the King.

The *Amuktamalyada* (*Canto IV, 265*) like the *Artha Sastra* of the Kautilya says that the Kings should employ spies even in watching actions of their ministers lest they should get concealed and advise them to undertake unnecessary things.

### **DIPLOMATIC AGENTS**

Diplomatic agents were sent to foreign courts whenever necessity arose. They were appointed to carry on "particular business of a special nature" in the foreign courts. The declaration and anno-

uncement of war and the conclusion of peace were all in the hands of these diplomatic agents.

The ambassadors were shown great respect wherever they went for they were the accredited representatives of their respective Kings. Krishnadevaraya truly says that "the friendship of an enemy King could be brought about by honouring and rewarding his ambassador. Disrespect shown to him would lead to war. "If Ferishta can be believed, when Muhammad Sha sent an ambassador to the court of Bukka I. "With a draft on the treasury of Vijayanagar," he was placed on an ass's back, paraded through all the quarters of the city and sent back with every mark of contempt and derision. This led to war. But Krishnadevaraya generally followed his own precept. He gave many gifts even to the messengers who brought the letters from the Sultan of Berar, Bidar and Golconda in which they had threatened to join the Adilsha of Bijapur to help him in recovering his lost territories unless Krishnadevaraya of his own accord restore them to him (Sewell). According to Krishnadevaraya a frank talk was necessary with an ambassador, and he says : "A King should freely converse in his court with the ambassadors of Kings of neighbouring states and speak to them about administration and wars so that his followers may understand his point. The envoy's importance rose with the importance of his mission.

The Kings of Vijayanagar maintained friendly relations with foreign powers and sent embassies to their courts. Their object in so doing was either to make acquaintance with them or to renew and strengthen old friendships.

It was the desire to secure the friendship of the Portuguese that made the Kings of Vijayanagar send embassies to the court of their viceroys at Goa. To them their friendship was valuable for two reasons — one was they could secure the monopoly of the trade in horses, and the other was their assistance in the wars with the Muslims.

### FALL OF THE EMPIRE

Achyutaraya — we have seen that Krishnadevaraya was succeeded by his brother Achyutaraya, a weak man lacking in personal courage. He soon lost the fortresses of Mudgal and Raichur situated between the Krishna and Tungabhadra. Obscure intrigues at the court led to an invitation of Ibrahim Adil Shah to visit Vijayanagar as the ally of one of the factions at court.—He came and was induced to retire with cash something like two million sterling besides other valuable gifts.

*Sadasivaraya :*

When Achyuta died in 1542, his place was taken by his brother's son, Sadasiva, who was merely a nominal king. The whole control of the government being in the hands of Rama Raja (or Raya) Saluva, son of Krishnadevaraya's able minister, Saluva Timma was closely connected with the royal family by marriage. In 1543 Ramaraja made an alliance with Ahmadnagar and Golkonda in order to effect a combined attack on Bijapur which was saved from destruction by the abilities of Asad Khan. In 1558, i.e. 15 years later Bijapur and Vijayanagar combined to attack Ahmednagar. The territory of that State was cruelly ravaged by the Raya's army and Ramaraya treated his Muslim allies with such open contempt, that the Sultans were convinced of the necessity for dropping their private quarrels and combining against the arrogant infidel.

No single Musalman sovereign was capable of contending with success against the wealth and hosts of Hindu prince. Ultimately all the four Sultans of Bijapur, Bidar, Ahmadnagar and Golkonda were convinced that their interests required them to sacrifice their rivalries and combine in an irresistible league in order to effect the destruction of the infidel. In order to draw closer the bonds of alliance, Ali Adil Shah married Chand Bibi, daughter of Hussain Nizam Shah of Ahmed Nagar whose sister was given to the son of the Sultan of Bijapur.

In December 1564, the four allied sovereigns established their joint headquarters at the small town of Tallikota. The town now included in the Bijapur district, Bombay, was then in the dominions of Ali Adil Shah, who received his allies as his guests.

The people and the rulers of Vijayanagara were confident of victory. Estimators of the forces at the command of Ramaraja vary. But it seems certain that his vast host numbered between half a million and a million of men, besides a multitude of elephants and a considerable amount of artillery. On the other side, the Sultan of Ahmednagar brought on the ground a park of no less than six hundred guns of various calibers.

The battle was fought on January 23, 1565 (V. Smith). At first the Hindus had the advantage, but they suffered severely from a Salvo of the Ahmednagar guns shot with bags of copper coin and from a vigorous cavalry charge. Their complete rout followed on the capture of Rama Raja, who was promptly decapitated by the Sultan of Ahmednagar with his own hand. No attempt was made to retrieve the disaster. About 100,000 Hindus were slain and the great river ran with blood. The princes fled from the city with countless treasures loaded upon more than five hundred

elephants and the proud capital by at the mercy of the victors who occupied it almost immediately.

Here we must pause for a while and note a significant fact. Though there was so much apparent harmony between the Hindus and the Muslims, the enlistment of the Muslims in the Hindu army in those days was a dangerous step taken by Devaraya II. Though this enlistment in the Hindu forces was done with the best of intentions by the emperor, ultimately it proved to be a fatal policy as borne out by the treacherous attitude of two Muslims in the service of Vijayanagar at the hour of need on the occasion of the Battle of Raksa Tangadi. We are informed of their treachery by Ceasar Frederick, but for whose detailed account we would be in the dark about the real cause of the defeat of the Hindus at the historic battle. He says: "These four kings were not able to overcome this city and the King of Bezenagar but by treason. The King of Bezenagar was gentle and had, amongst all other of his captains two which were notable and they were moores; and these two captains had either of them in three score and ten or four score thousand men. These two captains being of one religion with the four kings which were moores, wrought means with them to betray their own king into their hands.

The King of Bezenagar esteemed not the forces of the four kings his enemies, but went out of his city to wage battle with them in the fields; and when they were joined, the battle lasted but a while, not the space of four hours, because of the two traiterous captains, in the chiefest of the fight with their companies turned their faces against the king and made disorder in his army that as astonished they set themselves to fight (Purchas—His Pilgrims, X, pp. 92-93).

Anquetil du Perron too endorses this statement and observes:

"The King, abandoned, during the battle, by two Muhammadan chiefs, perished." (Origin, Growth and Decline of the Vijayanagar Empire, Ind. Ant., LII, p. 11).

### RUIN OF VIJAYANAGARA

The ruin wrought on the magnificent city may be described in the words of Sewell, who is familiar with the scene of desolation, when the princes fled with their treasures: "Then a panic seized the city. The truth became at last apparent. This was not a defeat merely, it was a cataclysm. All hope was gone. The myriad dwellers in the city were left defenceless. No retreat, no fight was possible except to a few, for the pack oxen and carts had almost all followed the forces to the war, and they had not returned. Nothing could be done but to bury all treasures, to arm the younger men, and to wait.

Next day, the place became a prey to the robber tribes and jungle people of the neighbourhood. Hordes of Brinjaris, Rambadis, Kurubas and the like pounced down on the hapless city and looted the stores and shops, and carrying off great quantities of riches. Couto States that there were six concerted attacks by these people during the day.

The third day saw the beginning of the end. The victorious Musalmans had halted on the field of battle for rest and refreshment, but now they had reached the capital and from that time onward for a space of five months Vijayanagar knew no rest. The enemy had come to destroy and they carried out their object relentlessly. They slaughtered the people without mercy; broke down the temples and Palaces, and wreaked such savage vengeance on the abode of the Kings, that with the exception of a few great stone built temples and walls, nothing now remains but a heap of ruins to mark the spot where once the stately buildings stood. They demolished the statues, and even succeeded in breaking the limbs of the huge Narasimha monolith. Nothing seemed to escape them. They broke up the pavilion standing on the huge platform which the Kings used to watch the festivals and overthrew all the carved work. They lit huge fires in the magnificently decorated buildings forming the temple Vithalaswami near the river, and smashed its exquisite stone sculptures. With fire and sword, with crowbars and axes, they carried on day after day, their work of destruction. Never perhaps in the history of the world has such havoc been wrought and wrought so suddenly on so splendid a city; teeming with a wealthy and industrious population in the full plenitude of prosperity one day, and on the next seized, pillaged and reduced to ruins, amid scenes of savage massacre and horrors begging description.

The pathetic language of the Hebrew prophet lamenting the ruin of Jerusalem applies accurately to the Indian tragedy:

“How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! How is she become as a widow! She that was great among the nations, and princes among the Provinces, how is she become tributary! The young and the old lie on the ground in the streets; my virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword. . . How is the Gold become dim! How is the most fine gold changed! The stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street.”

Ramaraja's elder brother Tirumala took refuge at Penukonda. He usurped the throne in 1570 A.D. The most remarkable king of the new dynasty was Venkata I. He came to the throne about 1585. He seems to have moved his capital to Chandragiri and was noted for his patronage of Telugu Poets and Vaishnava authors. It is unneces-

sary to follow the history of his successors, who gradually degenerated into merely local chiefs. In 1639, a Naik subordinate to Chandragiri granted the site of Madras to Mr. Day, an English factor. In 1645 this transaction was confirmed by Ranga II.

The most important principalities formed by Hindus in the far south out of the fragments of the Vijayanagar empire was that of the Nayakas of Madurai. Tirumala Nayaka is firstly celebrated for his buildings which exhibit much dignity of design and splendour in execution.

We have so far discussed in a general way the origin, achievements, decline and fall of the Vijayanagar Empire in the course of the last two lectures; but this survey itself was intended to be merely a backdrop to a discussion of what lessons that history can provide for modern India. The choice of Vijayanagar history was deliberate and with a view to seeing if the course of history under similar situations can have lessons for humanity in regard to its political and social progress. In fact it can well be doubted whether past history holds any lessons for us and even if some can be discovered whether they can be used as guide-lines for future social and state activities.

This doubt is legitimate because, contrary to the oft-repeated dictum that 'history repeats itself', the truth seems to be that due to change in environment and time, it is impossible to have two identical situations in history so that what is valid and relevant to one situation need not be and often will not be valid or relevant in the other. But though we may not have identical situations we can have surely similar situations. But even in regard to similar situations, the similarity may often be superficial and apparent while the underlying difference which prevents them from being identical will be essential and real; i.e. in any historical situation the dominant factor is the human factor and that is what makes a historical enquiry fundamentally different from a physical or scientific investigation. The human factor operates differently in different places because of the change in physical environment; and differently at different times because of the added experience or lack of it which will characterise human behaviour and experience is so co-eval with time. Now, students of history undertake comparisons between different periods and regions in history because of this element of experience which mankind gains in the course of its evolution; the purpose of the comparison is to see if experience has been gained and if it can be used for the betterment of mankind.

Therefore a comparison between the experience of Vijayanagar and of modern India will have for its purpose the discovery of what

lessons the former can have for the latter. Now the circumstances under which Vijayanagar was established are well-known. There was a clear need for rescuing the country from the onslaught of alien culture which in those times took the form of physical attack on Hindu temples, desecration of sacred places, iconoclasm and infidel-hailing of all kinds. The kind of people who inaugurated this empire was, strangely enough, a group of reconverted Hindus — the Sangama Brothers, — under the leadership of a Hindu Saint, Vidya-ranya. The establishment of Vijayanagar had a two-fold significance as a Hindu empire providing the Hindus with the socio-political framework wherein they could function without fear of molestation; and as a bulwark against the Muslims whom the extreme South had tasted on more than one occasion before. From this circumstance it will not be wrong for the historian to infer that Vijayanagar would have failed in its mission if it did not promote Hindu ideals. The promotion of these ideals, however, was a major preoccupation of Vijayanagar. From this follows a natural query, what these values are which the founders of Vijayanagar were so anxious to pursue. In the first place, one could say that the most conspicuous aspect of this duty was to prevent the destruction of typically Hindu institutions like Vedic schools, Hindu temples, Brahmanical localities and other charitable institutions promoting the welfare of the Hindus. The circumstance would surely have constantly reminded the rulers of Vijayanagar, the subjects of that State and even people outside it, that it was a State intended to protect the Hindu, his ideals and his institutions from those of Islam. Vijayanagar never discriminated in its employment of Muslims in the civil and military services. Its role was merely defensive.

This situation reminds us of the circumstances under which Independent India was created in 1947. The most dominant factor in the last years of British rule in India was the demand by the Muslims for a sovereign independent State of their own and the two-nations theory that was supposed to justify the demand. For a second time in the history of this country, a confrontation between Muslim and non-Muslim forces was imminent. Just as Vijayanagar to the south of the Tungabhadra and the Bahmani Kingdom to the north of it faced and posed a threat to each other for more than two centuries, after 1947 the dominions created by the Indian Independence Act (1947) grew into independent republics and have created and maintained a tradition of suspicion and hostility to each other. This is a current problem for those in charge of the external and military affairs of this country, and the problem needs an urgent solution. We should in this context see how Vijayanagar fared under similar circumstances and if her history can provide us any guidelines in this matter. Vijayanagar started with the avowed object of containing Islam; when

that had been fairly achieved the rulers of Vijayanagar could afford to be tolerant to all communities and religions including Islam and they enlisted even Muslims in their armies, kept a copy of the Koran in their court, permitted the construction of mosques etc., in their kingdom. This tolerance became a sort of tradition with them, because it had been discovered that it was not unsafe. But it was *not possible to be so sure*. In the fag-end of the reign of the 3-rd dynasty, i.e. when Ramaraya was in effective power, Vijayanagar convinced itself of its invulnerability basing itself on the achievements of Krishnadevaraya's regime, and set about aggressively interfering in the affairs of the five kingdoms of the Deccan (the successors of the Bahmani Kingdom) and succeeded in bringing about a unity among them which but for Ramaraya's provocations could not have come about. The united Muslim forces destroyed the imperial status of Vijayanagar in the Battle of Talikottah. Now this unfortunate consequence did not flow from any internal weakness or disunity but by mismanagement of foreign policy by Ramaraya. India's chances of satisfactorily dealing with the neighbouring and distant Muslim powers will be to avoid the assumptions of the leaders of Vijayanagar on the eve of Talikottah and to bring about internally and externally conditions of trust in her *bona fides*.

This will be achieved by accepting the fact of the existence of two sovereign independent republics within geographical India with good grace and not merely as a bitter necessity. In the days of Vijayanagar there were many independent states in India but they were all the time warring against each other. It was not merely a military necessity for them but the civil preoccupation of those states amounted to so little that they could spend so much time and resources on war in spite of the consequent destructions. But the responsibilities of the modern State are not only defence and taxation but solving the growing problems of the welfare of the people. The diversion of much needed funds to military purposes is most undesirable, for a welfare state of plenty and prosperity cannot come into being except in an atmosphere of undisturbed peace. So modern India cannot afford wars as Vijayanagar could. It may, however, be asked what is India to do if wars are forced on her by belligerent neighbours. In such a case, however, India's duty is clear; she must defend herself. But there can be a certain line of diplomatic activity and direction of foreign policy which can operate as powerful deterrents on militant neighbours without India having to invest heavily in arms. So, the lesson which a traditional monarchical polity can provide for a modern republican polity can only be limited for their problems are different.

Internally, as mentioned above, it will be necessary to follow in the modern day a social policy of strict neutrality among the different communities and religious sects in the country. This is not merely a question of ordinary tolerance for reasons of expediency but a fundamental question of social attitude. This attitude is now called secularism.

Secularism has been variously defined. In the west, where in the last century that social philosophy got its name, it is considered to be an essentially non-religious social attitude; i.e. subordinating religious considerations in public policy to purely material considerations. Therefore it does not involve rejection of religious or acceptance of atheistic dogmas, it does involve a clean sub-ordination of religion to non-religion. This attitude, therefore, also means subordination of religious and spiritual values themselves to worldly values; when this happens religious differences tend to lose their importance. It took a long time for this social philosophy to grow in the Western countries. A series of historical events of great importance like the reformation which questioned the papal authority, the Renaissance which raised humanism to a new place of social value at the expense of religion and the growth by science and technology in the 17th and the 18th centuries; further strengthened by the industrial revolutions shaped the secularist philosophy which was entrenched by a materialism born of colonial and imperial expansions and achievements. These historical experiences were unknown to India in the order and in the manner in which they were known to the west.

The ancient and orthodox tradition in Hindu polity of desisting from persecution of opposing sects and not only tolerating their existence but also providing them with basic amenities is not the same as the modern secularist idea. Of course it is often said that secularism is not denial of religion but that it is only equal treatment of all religions; but that would mean excessive preoccupation with religious affairs on the part of the State. It is also said that secularism only means that the State should not uphold a particular religion. If that is so, ancient Hindu polity cannot be considered to be secular; for the King, who was the essence of the Hindu State, did have his own religion. In Vijayanagar, the earlier kings were Saivites while the later ones were Vaishnavites. The religion of the king was, of course, not imposed upon the people; the people could pursue any religion they pleased. In the case of the modern State, also, freedom to any religion unhampered by State interference belongs to the people; and the State itself is becoming rather impersonal and it can have no religion. But the really distinguishing feature

of the modern State is that even in declaredly religious states like 'the Islamic State of Pakistan' etc., the people at large are coming more and more under this spell of science and modernism, which slowly eat into the vitals of faith. The importance of religion as a factor in public life is diminishing to the point of disappearance though in private life it may still have its influence. In a country like India this change will not come easily nor is it considered necessary by many. In fact an ideal way of public life has been suggested to keep religion and politics apart: each for its own purpose and in its own sphere.

The tolerant policy which the rulers of Vijayanagar followed did not prevent their finally getting into trouble at Talikotah; for peace is possible only if all the parties are agreed on its need; This may be true in regard to international relations; but peace among different denominations within a country can surely be brought about by a careful policy of playing down the importance and influence of religion and religious institutions in the public affairs of the country.

The most characteristic feature of India has been its unity in the midst of diversity. This diversity relates not only to religion but also to regional cultures and languages. There are points at which Indian cultural diversity has been most prominent, but so far these have not been able to break the essential threads of unity which bind the millions of this country together.

Geographically, India falls into many convenient and well-demarcated regions which in ancient days were marked off by rivers, plateaus, mountain chains, and separated by lack of good roads or rapid means of transport; they had therefore the tendency to develop cultures with markedly regional stamp on them. In the modern day, on the other hand, means of communication have revolutionalised to such an extent that the whole world may be said to have shrunk in its size. The system of communications is so well established that interdependence of regions and mutual contacts and understandings among them have grown. This impact can lead to strangely contrary results; that is, while they can lead to conditions of mutual understanding, they can also lead to regional jealousies, rivalries and conflicts.

In ancient and medieval India the establishment of a large empire as a result of conquest resulted in different regions coming under the same rule. This is not known to have permanently welded the regions into a common pattern of life; each region,

though under the same ruler, continued for all practical purposes to be its old self; and when the empire fell, it disintegrated not into any disorganised, chaotic, disorder but into its natural components i.e., the old regions; so the rise and fall of empires did not mean in India, at least, any great disruption of social life. In modern India, on the other hand, there is a conscious attempt to integrate the nation and to iron out regional differences. This attempt has met with resistance, the nature and reasons for which have not been understood by well-meaning administrators. The resistance is due to the fact that inspite of migrations of linguistic and religious groups from one region to another, it is impossible to achieve complete integration of one regional culture with another.

In the Vijayanagar period Telugu speaking people migrated in large numbers to Southern Tamil districts both as administrators and as merchants. But their linguistic difference keeps their identity safe and their origins are still remembered; so that any attempt to achieve total integration by interfering with typically local cultural traits will be not only exceedingly difficult, but even if it is easy, undesirable, because in the process we will be losing much that is valuable in regional culture. It will be a valuable lesson of history for modern India to learn from this, that accommodation and adjustment of regional cultures and differences would be better and more feasible than integration and unity is always to be preferred to uniformity in these matters.

This naturally takes us to the consideration of an allied historical fact. Vijayanagar was an empire in a stricter sense than the Mauryan, Gupta or Chola empires, and resembled the Moghal empire in composition and pattern. That is, the Vijayanagar empire was in its final shape the consolidated result of military conquests and was ruled at distant parts of the empire by trusted viceroys who functioned as proconsuls exercising enormous powers which were sufficient to enable them to defy the imperial authority itself if and when opportunity arose. This led to a kind of feudal arrangement which in the case of the Moghal empire was known as the Mansabdari system and in the case of Vijayanagar as the Nayakship. In the twilight of Moghul power, the Nawabs of Oudh, and Bengal and the Nizam of Hyderabad were more powerful than the Emperor in Delhi; and in the last years of Vijayanagar, especially after Talikotah, the Nayaks of Madura, Tanjore, etc., were, in spite of their legal and theoretical subordination, powerful barons practically independent and even defiant of Vijayanagar imperial authority. Another important feature of imperialism which marked Vijayanagar administration was that the regions which were conquered and

included in the nucleus state were treated as ancillary appendages to the core of the empire. The capital of Vijayanagar, as in the case of the Moghul empire, was in the extreme north and all political power and activity were concentrated there. The southern part of the empire therefore tended to feel alienated from the heart of the empire. Any attempt to keep the vast territories and regions of India within a certain delimited framework would necessarily partake of the characteristics of imperial government, whatever the nature of the administrative machinery which operates that government, and whatever the nature of the political set-up. Therefore even now in modern India with its capital in the extreme north and real power still being wielded by politicians belonging to that part of the country, a certain measure of force, perhaps inconsistent with the principle of regional autonomy, will be necessary to preserve the facade of an integrated and unified country. This is essentially a problem of the balance of power between the centre and the states in a federal set-up. Parliament members pressing for holding one of its sessions in South is a pointer in this regard.

Federation and feudalism have thus a common problem namely the need to nicely balance the powers which shall inhere in two sets of authority in a single state system. No doubt feudalism is a socio-political arrangement in which the feudal subordinates at the Baronial level tend to acquire more and more power at the expense of the monarch and slowly assume almost monarchical powers thereby weakening central authority; in the federal arrangement also we have a central or union authority and a state or regional authority; and we inscribe into a constitution the respective spheres of their political and financial functioning. In any discussion about federalism, it is usual and perhaps also quite proper to assume that the constitution of the United States is a proto-type and a norm. In the federal system of the United States, by force of historical circumstances, the States retained the residuary powers in addition to mentioned powers and invested the federal centre (which they created) with only specific powers. This weighted the balance of political power in the United States federation quite in favour of the States; and the constitution of the United States is the earliest written constitution which effected an internal distribution of the sovereign powers of a State and embarked on the delicate task of distribution of powers between two political agencies within a single state system. This circumstance has made all discussion on feudalism accept the grant of residuary powers to the States as proper and natural and any deviation from that pattern as an undesirable aberration. The powers of the States, from the geopolitical angle, are distributed over clearly demarcated regions which are contiguous

to one another while the federal powers are diffused over the whole country in an even manner. Meanwhile the powers of the states emphasise the differences and specialities of the regions; the federal powers represent the common features of the national polity and unify the system. Therefore, in the federal as in the feudal, there is a unifying factor and a basic factor simultaneously operating. The former is a political necessity and the latter a recognition of historical actualities. Wisdom consists, one should think, in retaining the benefits of both without unduly emphasising either.

But it is also well known that there are other types of federal arrangements, not to speak of the confederate system which is typified in the Swiss political arrangement. The alternative to the federation of the United States type is to grant the residuary powers to the Centre as has been done in the Canadian Constitution. There is perhaps no particular virtue in either arrangement, for success in either system depends not on the physical framework of the system but on the political wisdom and patriotism of the governors and the governed. It is a matter of experience that the grant of residuary powers to the Centre as in the case of Canada has not turned the central authority into a sort of despotism and that the retention of residuary powers by the States as in the U.S.A. has not led to fissiparous tendencies gaining ground at the expense of the national good. In the latter case, the States are not treated like subordinate adjuncts to the Centre but as honoured partners in national power. With United States recently we have witnessed the tendency and the necessity to invest the federal Centre with powers not found in any of the lists in the Constitution; e.g. power relating to the utilisation of atomic energy. Further then differences with the matter of investing the Centre of the States with the residuary powers are the result of historical circumstance. In the United States the thirteen revolving States joined to form a federal government of their will and choice realising the advantages of unity; but in the case of Canada as in the case of India, though the State divisions existed before the Constitution came into being, the Constitution was given by some authority from above and not created by the conjoint action of the parts. In India when the constitution was drawn up either there was the natural apprehension that the States might tend to pull apart in case they possessed vital and residuary powers and there was also the desire on the part of the makers of the Constitution to create a powerful and unified national state. Hence the Union government is given the powers it enjoys today.

Now, in the feudal system, too, it is possible to have variations wherein the national, power is strictly controlled by monarchi-

cal authority. Students of history know how Henry II of England stood the European feudalism on its head in England, insisting on harmonial subordination to himself while the contributed a significant example of feudal insubordination to the French monarch on the continent. Both systems can work provided there is a wise realisation of the practical limitations in the exercise of power by the agencies endowed with power. In India the makers of the Constitution thought it advisable to endow the Union Government with the residuary powers providing the states with specific powers. But all political experience has shown that power tends to grow unless kept under check; power in the course of its exercise will also assume jurisdiction originally unintended and thus create problems the solution of which is the business of the High and Supreme Courts. Thus it is that in modern India we find occasionally states behaving as if they were as sovereign and independent as India as a whole. It is natural, and perhaps just and legal, for a State to argue that in regard to the specific bit of power given to it by the Constitution it is sovereign. Essentially, therefore, the function of the Supreme Court is to settle differences among different claimants to jurisdiction and power. This is mainly a legal function, but when the State functions it politically and thus at times arise clashes between the points of view of the judiciary on the one hand and those of the legislature and the executive on the other. But the entire problem in a federal set-up is capable of being confined within the proper limits indicated by constitutional law. In the feudal arrangement, however, everything is practically political; the Nayaks and the viceregal authorities did not share power with the emperor in a legal sense but enjoyed a certain delegated authority. Even this delegation can be construed to be legal as it was the royal wish which constituted secular law in those days. But the delegation of power or its withdrawal by the Emperor was clearly motivated politically and the involved legal processes of the modern day were absent in those days, so that from the functioning of the Vijayanagar polity in this regard no useful lessons can be drawn by the modern jurist or political scientist. Legally, the Nayak Viceroys were absolutely subordinate to the sovereign King who in the Vijayanagar polity was the supreme authority. Thus strictly speaking there is no useful analogy between the division of power between the Vijayanagar monarch and his viceregal Nayaks and that between the Union and the States in modern India. Though it is so, it must be conceded that practically there is a common problem, which it will be useful to look into. That is, whatever the legal position of the feudal subordinates, their strength or weakness will be in inverse proportion to that of the King, namely the central imperial authority. If the centre is strong, the feudal subordinate will be weak

and submissive; if not the latter will be unruly and rebellious; an extreme manifestation of feudal disobedience being declaration of independence of the imperial authority and setting up of another sovereign State. This can also happen in a federal arrangement, as happened during the war in the United States of America. That was an instance of the federal authority having to assume extraordinary powers and even to violate specific provision in the Constitution which prohibits declaration of war without congressional sanction and to seek a political solution by force when federal constitutional law and recourse to the Supreme Court in the normal manner had failed. This is very relevant to the present conditions in India. It is a question of whether the central authority should be further strengthened to secure unbreakable unity in the country or whether we should indulge in the luxury of regional autonomy at the risk of national solidarity. It is a lesson of Vijayanagar history that in spite of centralisation the empire could not be held together after external forces had weakened the core and provided the fringes with opportunity for political insubordination. India is also faced today with these three factors of a theoretically and legally strong centre, politically influential states and possible alien forces on the frontiers of the country.

As we said before, Vijayanagar was obliged to keep constant vigil on the northern borders, as we too are to-day obliged to do. Vijayanagar was not distinctly and undoubtedly stronger than her northern neighbours and so a series of profitless wars were waged by them against the north both for defensive purposes and to gain initiative in an unequal situation. In as much as a similar situation does exist in India to-day, the problem of defence, diversion of revenue to the military budget and giving priority to armaments etc., become matters of urgent attention. But conditions have in other directions changed since the days of Vijayanagar. Organised attempts to substitute the discussion at the conference table for fighting in the battlefield is a feature of world diplomacy after the first world war though occasional attempts to do so were not unknown even before. Now it is imperative for all governments, especially those which profess to defend themselves on popular opinion democratically ascertained, to avoid war altogether and divert the usually disproportionately large military budget to civilian needs.

The states of the modern day have assumed responsibilities and the powers needed to bear them, which did not belong to states of the ancient and medieval period. The entire welfare problem of the civilian populations has become the concern of the

modern State. So its public duties have been immense and the state has therefore assumed enormous powers needed to shoulder those responsibilities. But while assumption of responsibility and power can be unilaterally accomplished by a state, creation of wealth or discovering revenue is impossible without the co-operation of the citizens and there is a definite limit on the resources of the citizens also. Wise economy consists in discrete employment of scarce resources among competing and urgent demands. So even the modern State in spite of opportunity for internal and external borrowing should learn to line within its means. In Vijayanagar as in other empires of those times, wealth was concentrated in the capital and in the royal court and among the noblemen, in temples and charitable institutions. The contrast between the poverty of the masses and the prosperity of the economically better-off classes was marked. It is not denied that even now that picture of uneven economy persists. But the difference is that a modern State is committed to wiping off this inequality. Therefore it has to arm itself with the power and finances needed to achieve that social goal.

One of the major factors which contributed in the past to keep India divided into different cultural areas was language. Though the Constitution lists 15 major languages the language most known to the elite, to the administrators and to the intelligentsia is English which is not one of those 15 languages. In the Vijayanagar period the language of the court, namely Telugu, was the language of administration at higher levels; at lower levels like the district and below, the regional languages and their role were never disturbed. In viceregal centres like Madurai and Tanjore, the court language was Telugu while for miscellaneous other purposes Tamil and Kanna-da did play a role. This was similar to the status of Persian in the Moghul and other Muslim courts. These languages assumed the status of imperial languages which English was in the British period. But to-day language plays havoc with Indian politics. In a federal set-up it is impossible to minimise the importance of regional languages especially when education is a State subject. But it is also urged that all-India administration needs an Indian language to take the place of English. This is essentially an imperial argument. It is not suggested that the battle between the political sentiment regarding national practice and considerations of national well-being can be easily or satisfactorily ended or settled. In such a case ancient and medieval politics instead of being examples to follow can even be warnings.

We have seen so far how because of the evolution of society and changes in political and social institutions and the role and

significance of the State itself, ideas and social and political systems which could have been viable and acceptable at an earlier age in the history of a country may cease to be useful guides for the future. The history of the rise, achievements, decline and fall of Vijayanagar certainly reminds of a period in the history of India where people and statesmen were faced with problems similar to those which face us today. Whatever be the manner in which these problems are tackled and attempted to be solved in different times, the very fact of the similarity of these problems is interesting.

There is a very important difference between the Vijayanagar polity and the modern India governmental system. That is, the former was a monarchy which did not involve popular participations in government or consultation among representative of the people—two political activities which are essential aspects of democracy. Modern Indian Government is democratic in structure and therefore it is run on party lines; they are political parties affiliating themselves to a set of political, social or economic doctrines and assure to their constituents redress of their public grievances and provisions of amenities through legislations. Parties are, in a representative democracy, a necessary channel through which public opinion is expressed. But in India of late the functioning of these political parties has begun to assume the aspect of a threat to the very democracy which they are supposed to sustain. Parties proclaim through election manifestos and otherwise the principles for which they stand. These will constitute basic principles of political and social philosophy which the parties cannot afford without sufficient reason to change in a flippant manner. But unfortunately now, the moral basis of party membership has suffered seriously and the slightest advantage which any other party might temporarily offer seems to be sufficient to attract people from one party to another; they cross the floor and shatter good democratic traditions. This weakening of the party-system will naturally weaken the Government and thereby prevent good government for the people.

In the modern democratic state where competition for political power is a chief characteristic of political parties, regional politics are allowed to develop because of the concentration of different political parties in different regions. Thus arise border problems, river water disputes, disputes regarding supply of electricity or water from State to State and the claims for location of major industries in different states. When these disputes arise and remain unresolved, regional tensions grow in the meantime and national solidarity is seriously affected.

In the modern day, public problems all over India tend to become stereotyped; even as benefits assume a single pattern, acts of indiscipline and destruction also assume a national pattern. Student indiscipline and strikes and bandhs and gheros have come to constitute sources of national waste in time, energy and resources. These weaken the nation normally when the country is faced with the need to cope with threats to the nation's safety from foreign hostile forces. When these fissiparous and destructive activities are encouraged by certain State Governments themselves, the consequences become doubly dangerous.

The defence of the frontiers of a country is the first charge cast on any civilised government because the national frontiers of a country are inviolable. The protection of the person and property of the citizens devolves on the government.

The defence strength should be sufficiently large, efficient and fully equipped. We have seen that in the battle of Rakshas Thangadi or better known to history as battle of Tallikota, the combination of the fighting forces of the Sultans, had a superior cavalry set to a great striking capability and also used cannon and copper shots which the Vijayanagar forces lacked. This was a major cause for the debacle of the Hindu forces at Tallikota.

There should be a systematic plugging of fifth columnists infiltrating into the army while recruitment is made to the defence forces. The two treacherous unfaithful Moors who were the captains in the army of Ramaraya played havoc at a crucial time of Vijayanagar history. This resulted in the decline and fall of the capital and ruin of the empire.

It has been authoritatively stated that the present foreign policy of the government of India stands for co-existence of all countries and non-alignment—shall I say non-involvement with any of the power blocks, either capitalist or Communist. India further strongly believes in non-interference in the international affairs of any other country.

These principles were severely put to test in 1962 on 20th October when the Chinese attacked our North Eastern frontier part and actually occupied tracts of Indian territory. By this limited action the Chinese presumably wanted to show their might and humiliate India and assume a bigger role in the affairs of Asia. Further their aim was to distract the welfare work of the central and State Governments constructing huge irrigation works like Bhakranaghal and

Nagarjunasagar—and establishing of several power plants. Any how China wanted a social and political confusion in this country and is ceaselessly at it, while itself has started on the voyage of cultural revolution by violent methods destroying all opposition found in its path.

In 1965, September, Pakistan, the ally of China tried to violate our frontiers to seek a solution of the Kashmir problem at the point of bayonet after having failed to achieve results round the conference table at the U.N.O.

Pakistan brought all the latest weapons and sabrejets into the offensive. They were all supplied to it by America for preventing the spread of Communism and its influence. At the time of the gift of these weapons to Pakistan, U.S.A. assured the Indian leaders and the government that those armaments would not be used against India which was a friendly country to the U.S.A.

But all this promise proved to be of no avail. The Pakistanis used the latest and most modern American arms and planes during the conflict. This was later affirmed by the American military observes specially sent for the purpose. But our brave jawans and great fighter-boys did their job so well that the designs of our enemy could not succeed. On the other hand, they got reverses both in the land and air attacks and they lost many tanks and planes. Our army was actually at the gates of Lahore. The Russian premier sought terms for peace and General Ayub of Pakistan and our late lamented Premier Lal Bahadur Sastri met at Tashkent and agreed to solve all problems by discussion which is generally known as Tashkent Agreement.

Again, on September 11th of this year 1967, the Chinese started their shooting game, as usual without notice, at a point near Nathu-la in Sikkim but this time they were badly beaten by all accounts.

There has been a great anxiety expressed in recent months that the Communist infiltration into the armed forces of India may jeopardise the discipline and fighting power of these defence forces. Hence at the time of recruitment, specially to the defence services, patriotic-minded people alone should be chosen, trained, and equipped for the defence of our country's frontiers.

The Vijayanagar administration had a very heavy taxation system as it had to meet the cost of frequent fights with the Sultans. This has often impoverished the peasantry and they naturally became

disgruntled. The rich were not very mindful of the poor. Hence the people suffering under economic exploitation were sometimes put to lot of distress—either by floods or famines. Naturally the masses lost interest in the administration and the general well-being of the people. Briefly stated, the people showed indifference. This kind of indifference of the people led to the weakening of the threads of the administration around.

Gandhiji, the father of the nation, using the Indian National Congress as an instrument by organising the patriotic forces in the country won freedom for India by truthful and non-violent means. The British agreed to quit India honourably without a shot being fired by the nationalists. On the 15th August of 1947, Independence was legally granted to India and Pakistan under the two-nation theory supported by the British.

Many a patriot made great sacrifices at the altar of freedom. We are all now the heirs of that great legacy. It was with great difficulty the much-coveted freedom was got. For the first time in the History of India, the writ of the President runs from Kashmir to Cape Comorin in the South and Cutch to Kohima in the East.

The Constituent Assembly representing all interests in India, gave the people of India, a federal type of constitution. The Parliament at the Centre and the Assemblies are all elected under adult franchise. For the last twenty years both at the centre and in the States, the majority ruling party was Congress.

After the election of 1967, the complexion in the State government changed and the strength of the Congress party was much reduced in the Centre. Now in many States, governments are run by non-Congress coalitions of united fronts. Of course, in Madras one single party by itself has a large majority and is running the government without having the necessity of taking its allies into the Cabinet.

In Bengal and Kerala we see the working of Communist trends. In other states parties are differently pulling apart without a set purpose. There are several instances of crossing the floor in recent times and toppling the ruling party and bringing down government. These trends are not to our nation's interest.

Personal jealousies, parochial interest on major, problems, linguistic rivalries, group manœuvres within a party creat unseemly factions leading to fissiparous tendencies all around.

They in turn endanger the stability of the State administration, weaken the relation between the States and the centre. Finally the bonds of national integration and unity will be cut asunder. This is the sure way to leading to disaster which no well wisher of India could ever contemplate.

Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom. Unless we girdle up and work unitedly as a nation it may not be easy to survive and progress. Vijayanagar rose in the south with the avowed object of protecting the Hindus and championing their religion from being destroyed by aliens at that time with its capital at Hampi on the banks of Tungabhadra.

Now India includes the erstwhile Portuguese possessions of Goa, Daman and Diu, the French possessions of Pondicherry, Karaikal and Enam and certainly a big country, with its capital at Delhi or Indraprasta on the banks of Yamuna. There is no special status for any person in living in any of the States—say, Madras, or Andhra, or Punjab. All are equal, and can only claim Indian citizenship which alone is recognised in the world at large.

In the last days of Vijayanagar, the people suffered heavily owing to incessant wars and feuds; society was torn into factions and became caste-ridden, the peasantry became worse day by day economically, the top ranks of the army became luxury-minded and ultimately they became treacherous to appease their material pleasures; intrigues of the court began to show their ugly face. All these had a definite chain reactions in the decline and fall of Vijayanagar empire.

Modern India is certainly greater several times than Vijayanagar in size and in resources. But if it should reach its destined goal, it must carefully avoid all these pit-falls and build up a strong centre having states in its orbit with contentment and satisfaction. It must continue to develop and equip its army, navy and air force with indigenous material. We must be self-sufficient in our military requirements. Our ordnance factories must produce all top class material for supplying to the armed forces. We should not depend entirely on others for at critical moments, we may get disappointments. The army must be supplied with the latest fighting material and equipment.

*To sum up :*

1. Sri Krishnadevaraya was a dynamic sovereign and had the personality and capability to inspire people at all levels. To him,

and the other Empire builders of Vijayanagara, Dharma was all-important. I have already mentioned in my previous lecture how his army men were prepared to lay down their lives for the sake of the Emperor.

Therefore we need leaders who can inspire people and inculcate in them a spirit of sacrifice and patriotism.

2. Sri Krishnadevaraya was never a dictator, as compared to some of the 20th century rulers like Adolph Hitler, Mussolini and others. Hence it is necessary to have control in exercising the power on the part of our leaders, as when the political leaders assume too much power they tend to become dictatorial in their conduct and behaviour.

3. The fall of the Empire at Tallikota was mainly attributable to the treason committed by two moorish captains who had under their command 70 to 80 thousand troops, against their own trusted king, Ramaraja.

Hence this gives us a lesson that in the recruitment of defence personnel and in the employment of diplomatic corps, care should be taken in screening the candidates as to their loyalty and love of the country.

4. There is no use in being proud and satisfied with the sacrifices made by our defence forces. The question that has to be asked is "Are the sacrifices made by them really worthwhile? Are the civilians behaving in a way to justify their sacrifices?" What is the use of their sacrifices if there is corruption, fraud, injustice all round?

Even the Vijayanagar empire, with all its glory, started to decline when the officials and viceroys in the provinces started to amass personal wealth to the detriment of the people and the State.

5. It is hard to attain freedom. But it is harder still to preserve it. To preserve the freedom, everyone should understand the real meaning of the word. The individuals should work hard and behave themselves in such a way as to deserve it. Every person should keep the personal and regional considerations subordinated to the welfare of the nation as a whole. The decline of Vijayanagar empire should warn us for avoiding internal disorders which, if unchecked, would pave the way for the total destruction of the country.

6. The fact that Vijayanagar empire was having a gold standard during those days, goes to prove how rich the country was. The Empire was never in debt. The argicultural and industrial output was so high that the prices of the commodities were low and it was in a position to export the commodities to foreign countries. The imports were less. The balance of trade was in favour of the Empire. Hence, the lesson we have to learn, is to keep the "Productivity Rate" of the commodities high (of course, the exception would be the population growth) so that the prices would be brought down and explore the possibilities for exporting our goods to foreign countries and thus slowly try to remove the name that "India is a debtor country".

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